MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL
No. 4 $4.95

THE NEW MUTANTS

By Chris Claremont
and Bob McLeod

STAN LEE PRESENTS

A MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL

THE NEW MUTANTS™

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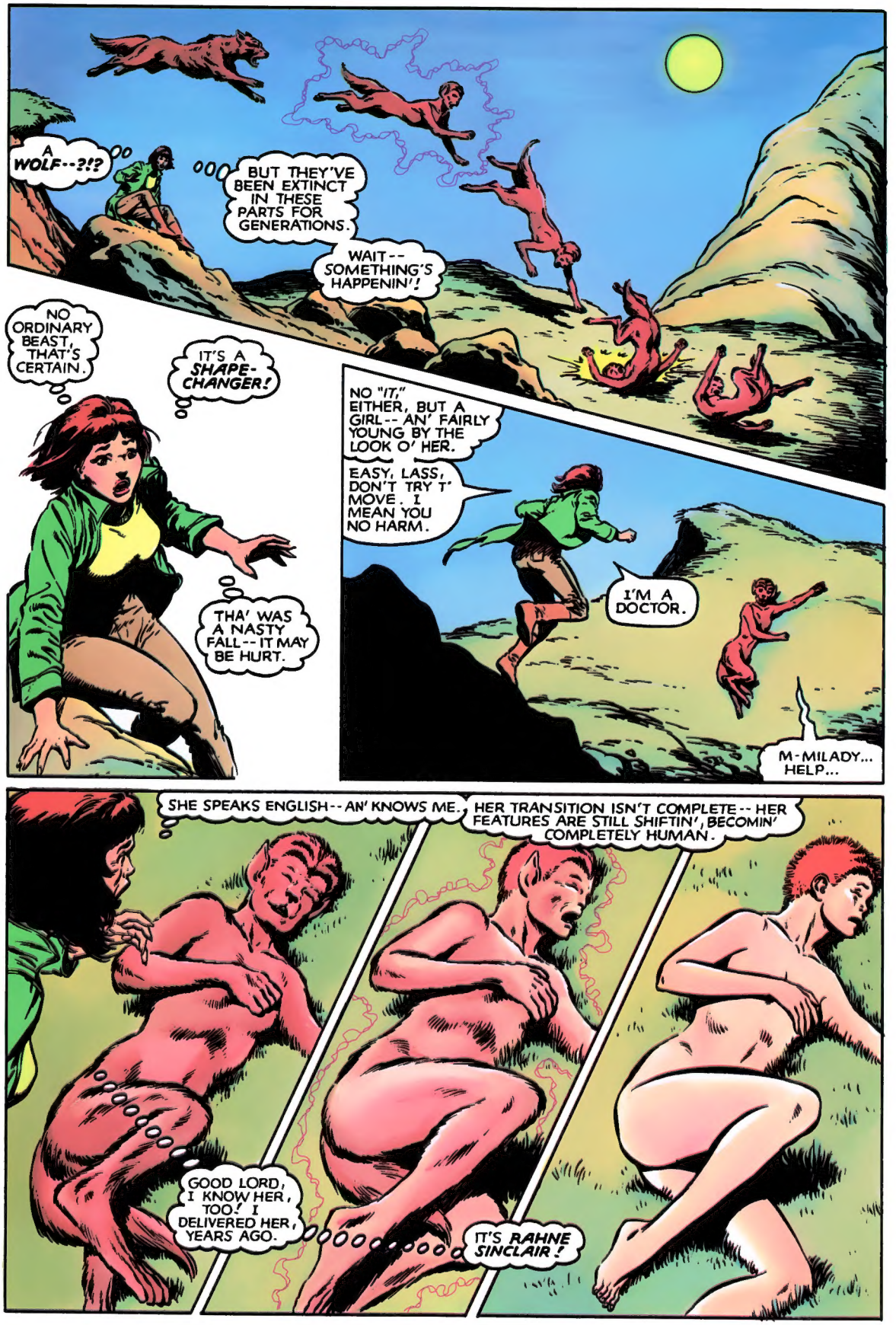
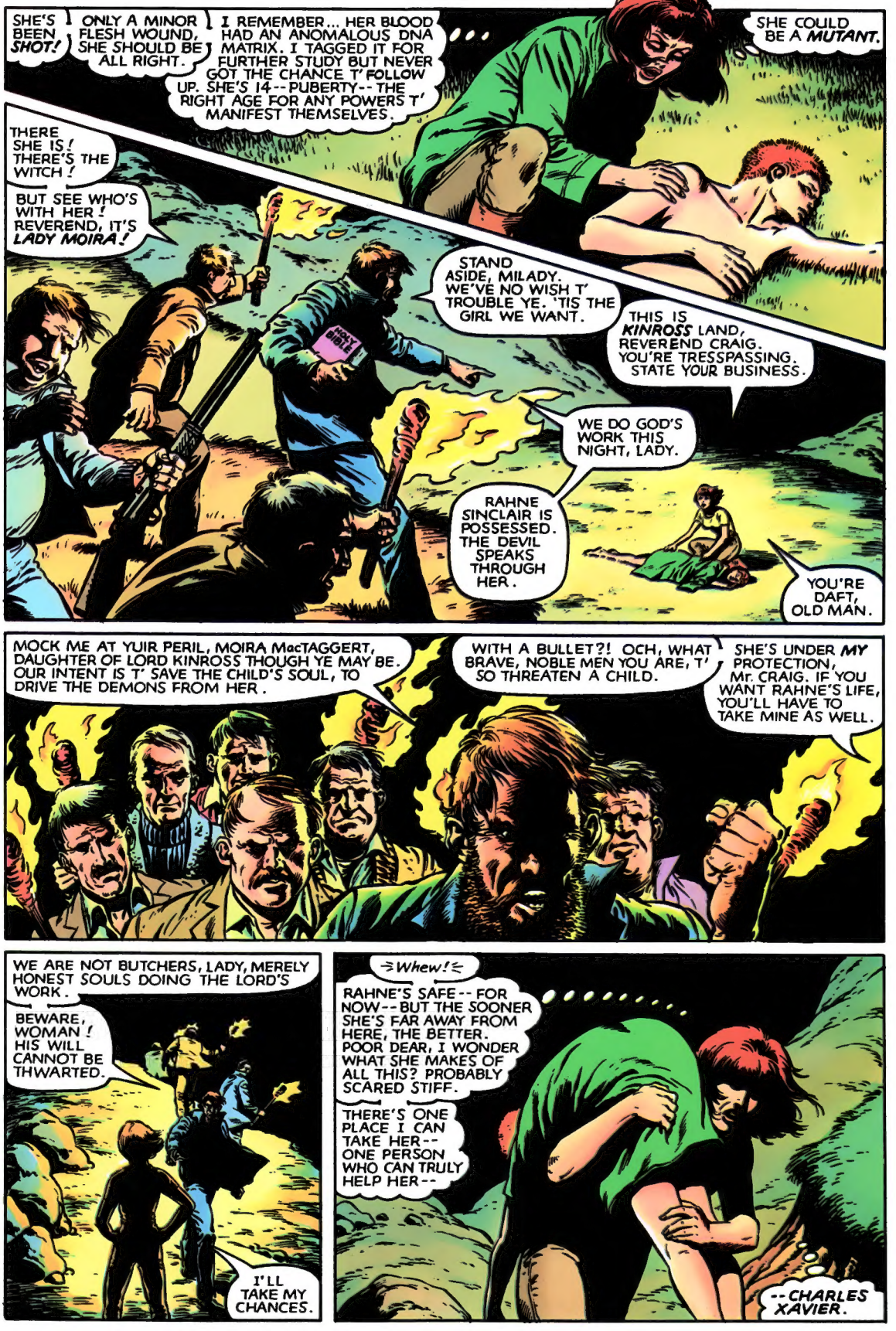
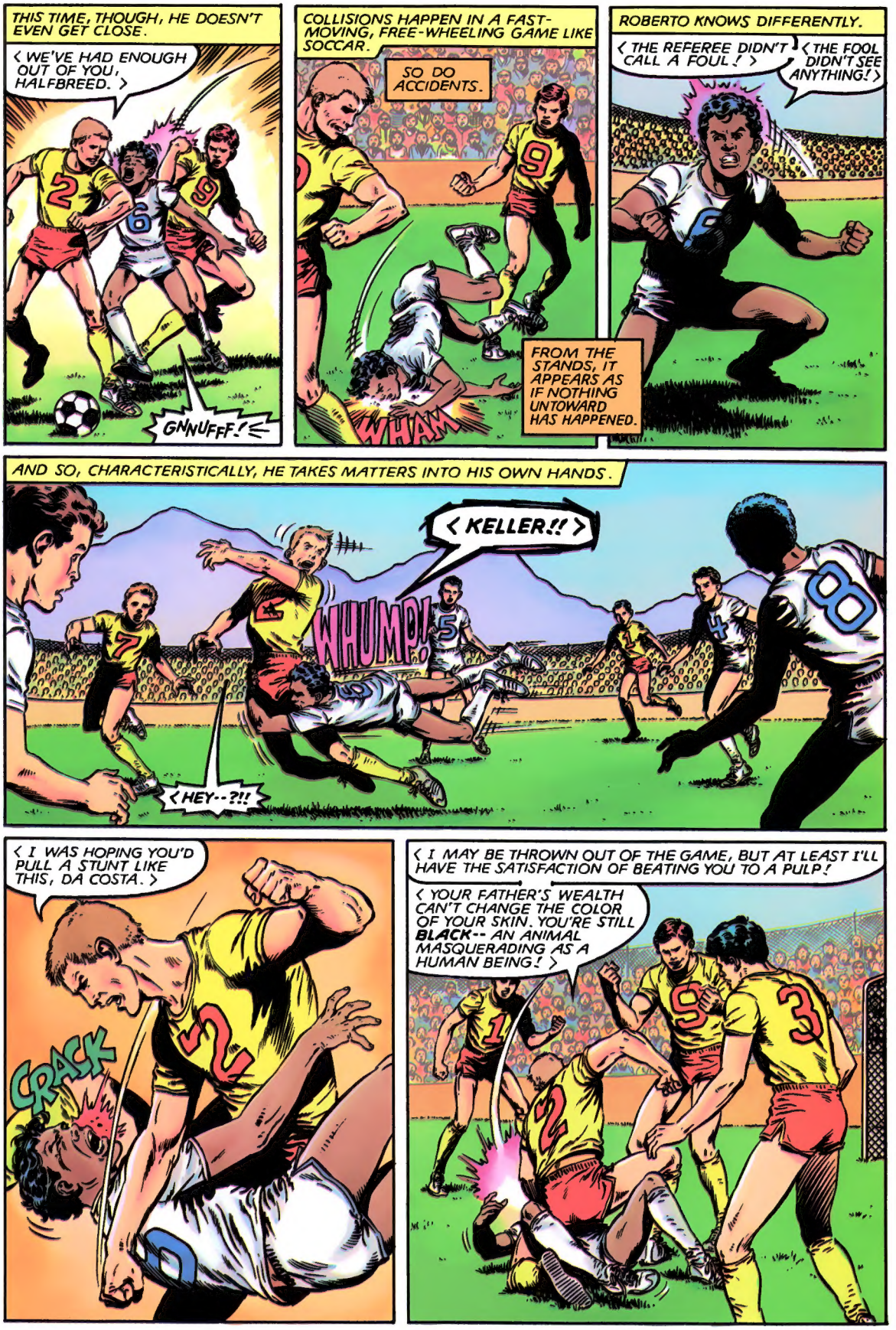
RENEWAL
THE SLOPES OF AN MORAG, IN THE NORTHWEST HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND...
WHAT THE -- BLAZES!?!

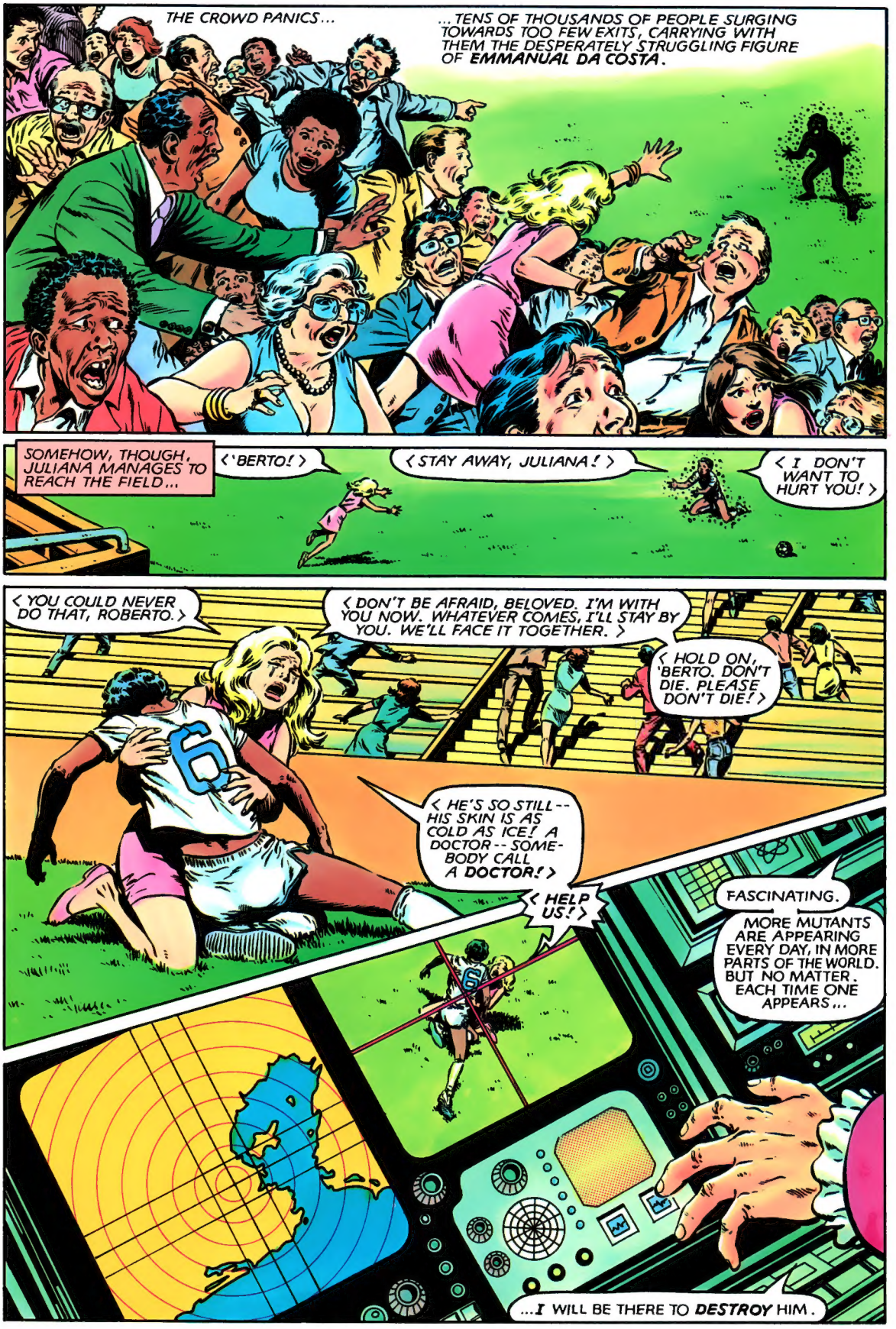

A WOLF--?!?
BUT THEY'VE BEEN EXTINCT IN THESE PARTS FOR GENERATIONS.
WAIT-- SOMETHING'S HAPPENIN'!
NO ORDINARY BEAST, THAT'S CERTAIN.
IT'S A SHAPE-CHANGER!
THA' WAS A NASTY FALL-- IT MAY BE HURT.
NO "IT," EITHER, BUT A GIRL-- AN' FAIRLY YOUNG BY THE LOOK O' HER.
EASY, LASS, DON'T TRY T' MOVE. I MEAN YOU NO HARM.
I'M A DOCTOR.
M-MILADY... HELP...
SHE SPEAKS ENGLISH-- AN' KNOWS ME.
HER TRANSITION ISN'T COMPLETE-- HER FEATURES ARE STILL SHIFTIN', BECOMIN' COMPLETELY HUMAN.
GOOD LORD, I KNOW HER, TOO! I DELIVERED HER, YEARS AGO.
IT'S RAHNE SINCLAIR!

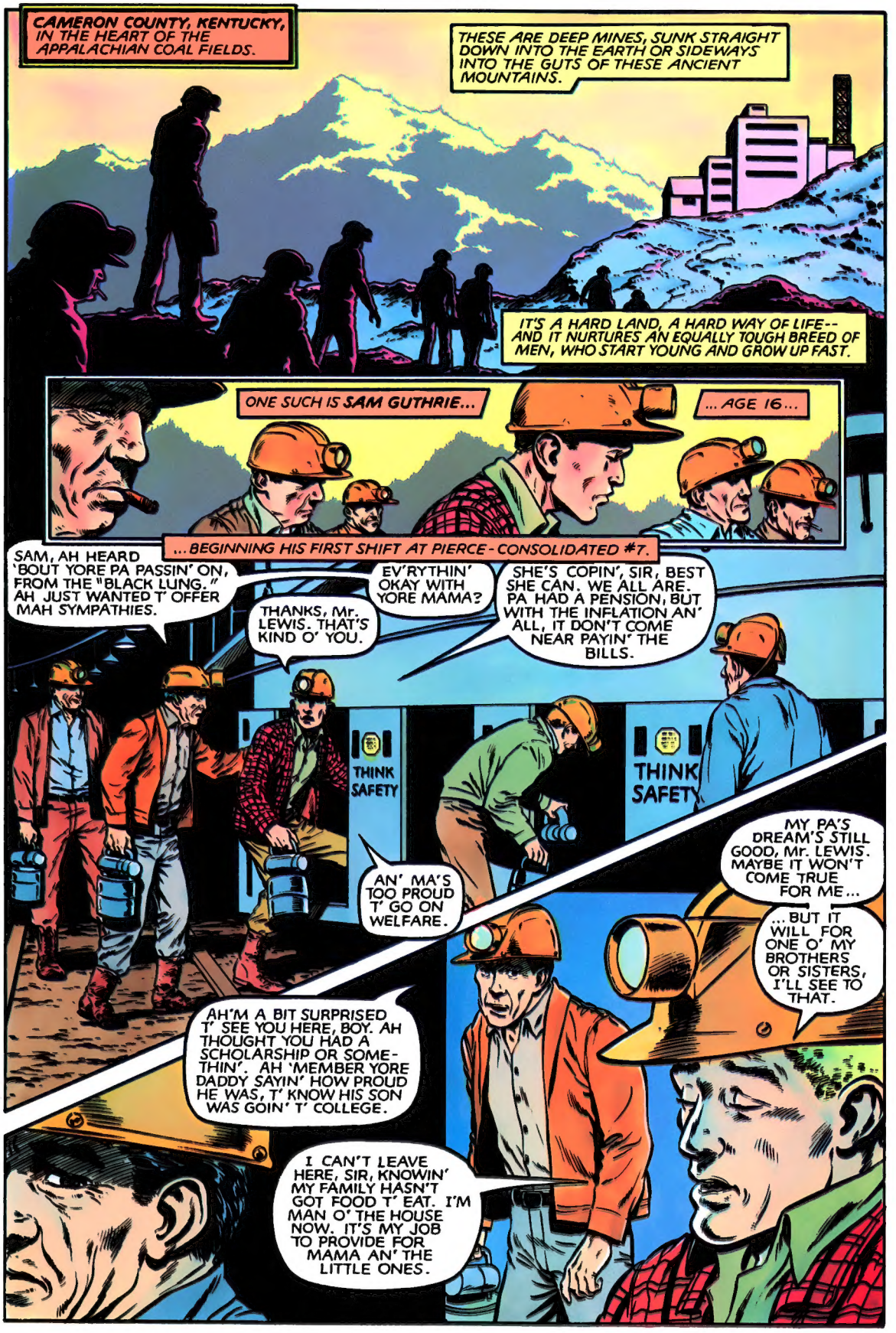

SHE'S BEEN SHOT!
ONLY A MINOR FLESH WOUND, SHE SHOULD BE ALL RIGHT.
I REMEMBER... HER BLOOD HAD AN ANOMALOUS DNA MATRIX. I TAGGED IT FOR FURTHER STUDY BUT NEVER GOT THE CHANCE T' FOLLOW UP. SHE'S 14--PUBERTY--THE RIGHT AGE FOR ANY POWERS T' MANIFEST THEMSELVES.
SHE COULD BE A MUTANT.
THERE SHE IS! THERE'S THE WITCH!
BUT SEE WHO'S WITH HER! REVEREND, IT'S LADY MOIRA!
HOLY BIBLE
STAND ASIDE, MILADY. WE'VE NO WISH T' TROUBLE YE. 'TIS THE GIRL WE WANT.
THIS IS KINROSS LAND, REVEREND CRAIG. YOU'RE TRESSPASSING. STATE YOUR BUSINESS.
WE DO GOD'S WORK THIS NIGHT, LADY.
RAHNE SINCLAIR IS POSSESSED. THE DEVIL SPEAKS THROUGH HER.
YOU'RE DAFT, OLD MAN.
MOCK ME AT YUIR PERIL, MOIRA MacTAGGERT, DAUGHTER OF LORD KINROSS THOUGH YE MAY BE. OUR INTENT IS T' SAVE THE CHILD'S SOUL, TO DRIVE THE DEMONS FROM HER.
WITH A BULLET?! OCH, WHAT BRAVE, NOBLE MEN YOU ARE, T' SO THREATEN A CHILD.
SHE'S UNDER MY PROTECTION, Mr. CRAIG. IF YOU WANT RAHNE'S LIFE, YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE MINE AS WELL.
WE ARE NOT BUTCHERS, LADY, MERELY HONEST SOULS DOING THE LORD'S WORK.
BEWARE, WOMAN! HIS WILL CANNOT BE THWARTED.
I'LL TAKE MY CHANCES.
≈Whew!≈
RAHNE'S SAFE--FOR NOW--BUT THE SOONER SHE'S FAR AWAY FROM HERE, THE BETTER. POOR DEAR, I WONDER WHAT SHE MAKES OF ALL THIS? PROBABLY SCARED STIFF.
THERE'S ONE PLACE I CAN TAKE HER--ONE PERSON WHO CAN TRULY HELP HER--
--CHARLES XAVIER.

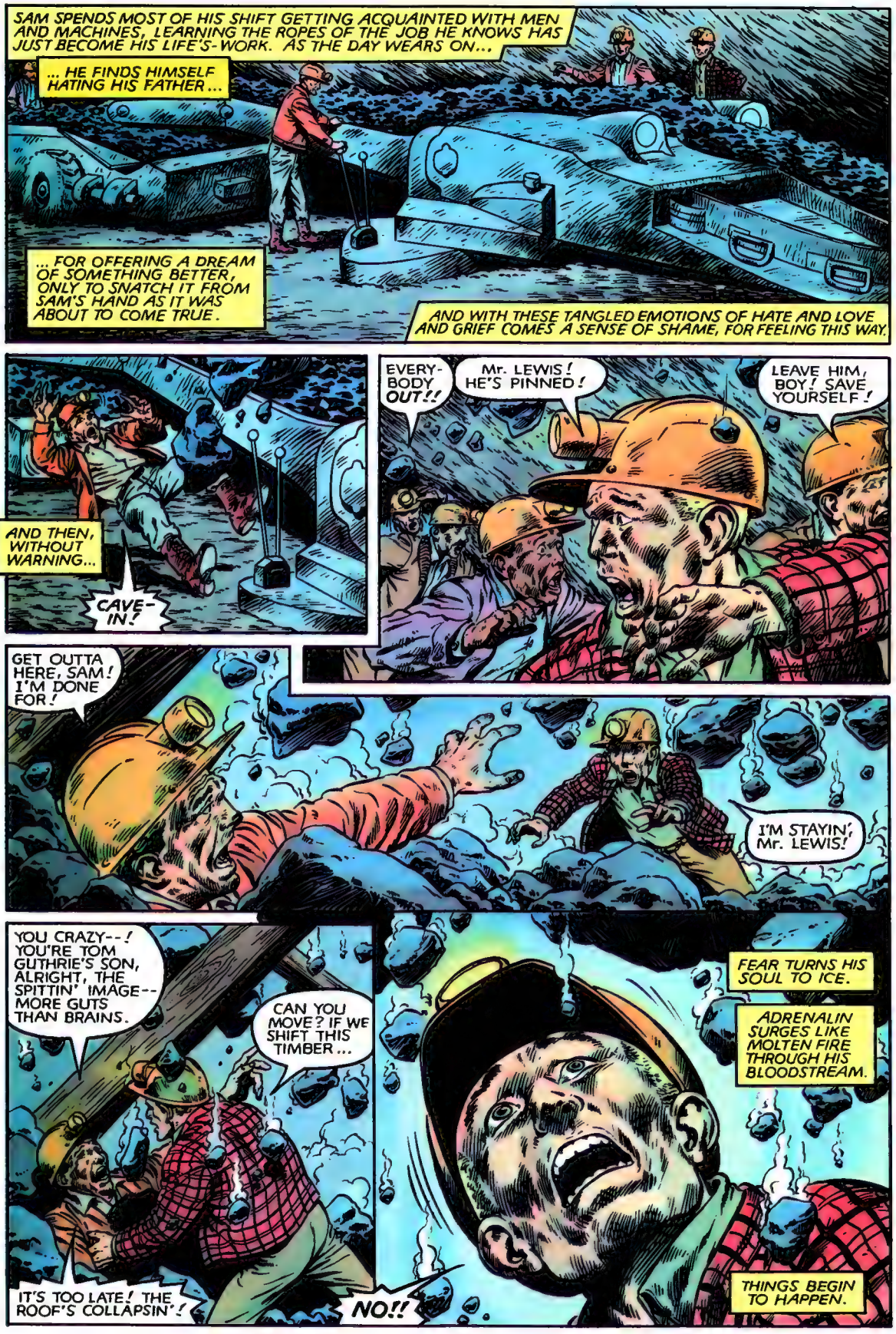
RIO DE JANIERO, BRAZIL...
THE CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH BETWEEN THE THUNDERBOLTS OF THE VILAR SCHOOL AND THEIR ARCH-RIVALS, THE DYNAMOS.
< GOAL!* >
*TRANSLATED FROM THE PORTUGESE -- L.
< DID YOU SEE, JULIANA?! BLESSED SAINTS, WHAT A MOVE! >
< MY SON IS AN ARTIST WITH THE FOOTBALL! >
JULIANA SANDOVAL DOES NOT ARGUE. IT IS A WONDERFUL THING TO BE YOUNG AND IN LOVE, AND HAVE THE ONE YOU LOVE BE A STAR. SHE'S NEVER FELT SO PROUD.
MEANWHILE, ON THE FIELD, PLAY RESUMES...
... AND ROBERTO DA COSTA RACES ONCE MORE TOWARDS THE DYNAMO GOAL.

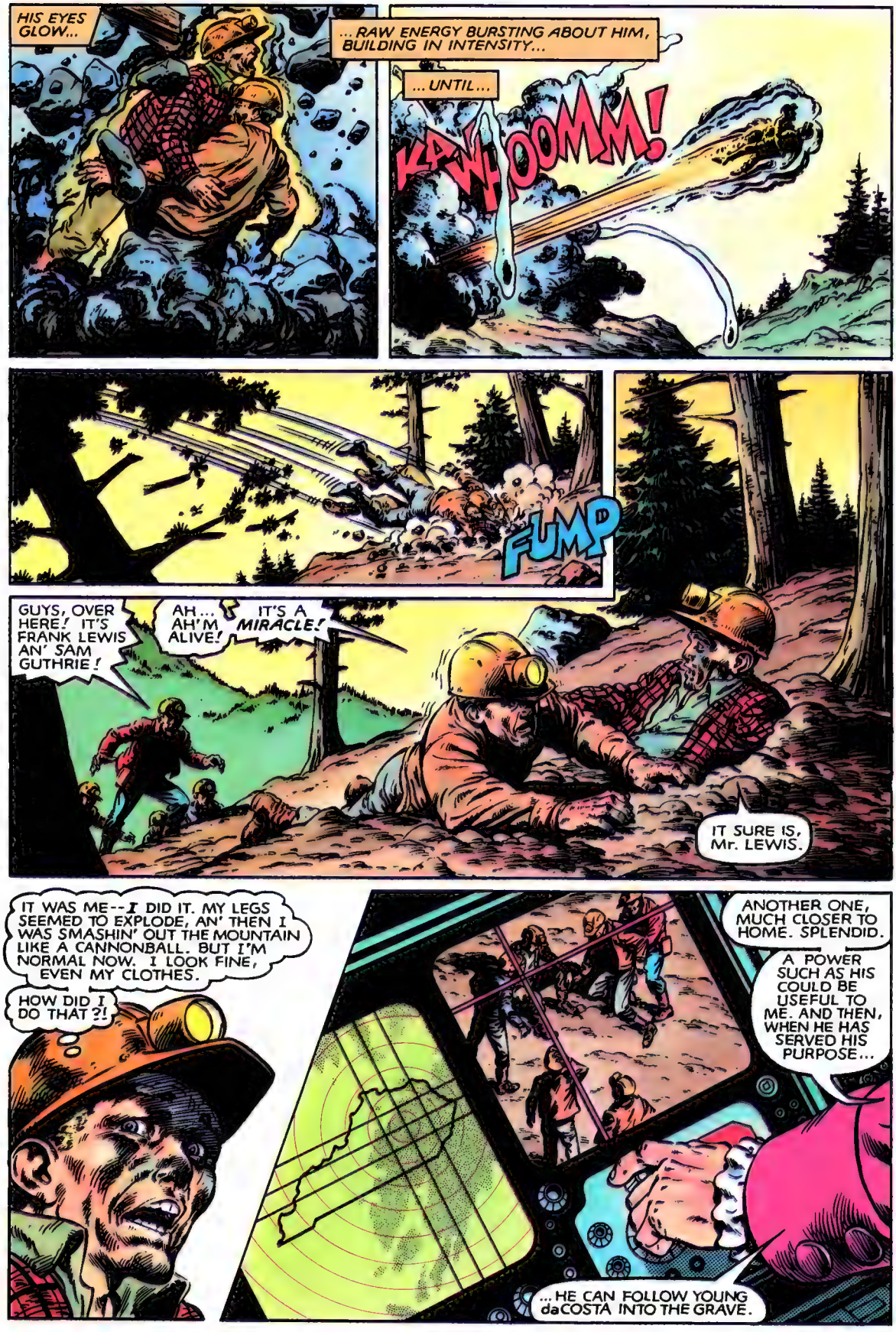

THIS TIME, THOUGH, HE DOESN'T EVEN GET CLOSE.
< WE'VE HAD ENOUGH OUT OF YOU, HALFBREED. >
GNNUFFF!
COLLISIONS HAPPEN IN A FAST-MOVING, FREE-WHEELING GAME LIKE SOCCAR.
SO DO ACCIDENTS.
WHAM
FROM THE STANDS, IT APPEARS AS IF NOTHING UNTOWARD HAS HAPPENED.
ROBERTO KNOWS DIFFERENTLY.
< THE REFEREE DIDN'T CALL A FOUL! >
< THE FOOL DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING! >
AND SO, CHARACTERISTICALLY, HE TAKES MATTERS INTO HIS OWN HANDS.
< KELLER!! >
WHUMP!
< HEY--?!! >
< I WAS HOPING YOU'D PULL A STUNT LIKE THIS, DA COSTA. >
CRACK
< I MAY BE THROWN OUT OF THE GAME, BUT AT LEAST I'LL HAVE THE SATISFACTION OF BEATING YOU TO A PULP! >
< YOUR FATHER'S WEALTH CAN'T CHANGE THE COLOR OF YOUR SKIN. YOU'RE STILL BLACK-- AN ANIMAL MASQUERADING AS A HUMAN BEING! >

〈 YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO BE HERE... 〉
〈 ... eh -- ?!? 〉
〈 ALL THE SAINTS PRESERVE ME -- 〉
〈 -- HE'S TURNING INTO A MONSTER! 〉
〈 RUN FOR YOUR -- 〉
-- LLIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIVESS!
〈 KEL- KELLER... ? WHAT DID I DO ? WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME ?! I FEEL SO... STRANGE. 〉
〈 WHY IS IT SO HOT ALL OF A SUDDEN -- IT'S LIKE I'M BURNING UP. 〉
〈 EVERYONE, STAY BACK ! KEEP AWAY FROM HIM ! 〉
〈 JAIME, DOMINIC -- YOU'RE MY FRIENDS ! 〉
〈 I ... NEED YOU ! 〉
〈 FATHER... 〉
〈 ...JULIANA... 〉
〈 ...SOME-ONE -- 〉
〈 -- HELP ME !! 〉
〈 HE'S COMING THIS WAY ! 〉
〈 MY SON -- THIS CANNOT BE. 〉
〈 IT ISN'T POSSIBLE ! 〉
〈 LET'S GET OUT OF HERE ! 〉


THE CROWD PANICS...
...TENS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE SURGING TOWARDS TOO FEW EXITS, CARRYING WITH THEM THE DESPERATELY STRUGGLING FIGURE OF EMMANUAL DA COSTA.
SOMEHOW, THOUGH, JULIANA MANAGES TO REACH THE FIELD...
<'BERTO!>
<STAY AWAY, JULIANA!>
<I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU!>
<YOU COULD NEVER DO THAT, ROBERTO.>
<DON'T BE AFRAID, BELOVED. I'M WITH YOU NOW. WHATEVER COMES, I'LL STAY BY YOU. WE'LL FACE IT TOGETHER.>
<HOLD ON, 'BERTO. DON'T DIE. PLEASE DON'T DIE!>
<HE'S SO STILL -- HIS SKIN IS AS COLD AS ICE! A DOCTOR -- SOMEBODY CALL A DOCTOR!>
<HELP US!>
FASCINATING.
MORE MUTANTS ARE APPEARING EVERY DAY, IN MORE PARTS OF THE WORLD. BUT NO MATTER. EACH TIME ONE APPEARS...
...I WILL BE THERE TO DESTROY HIM.

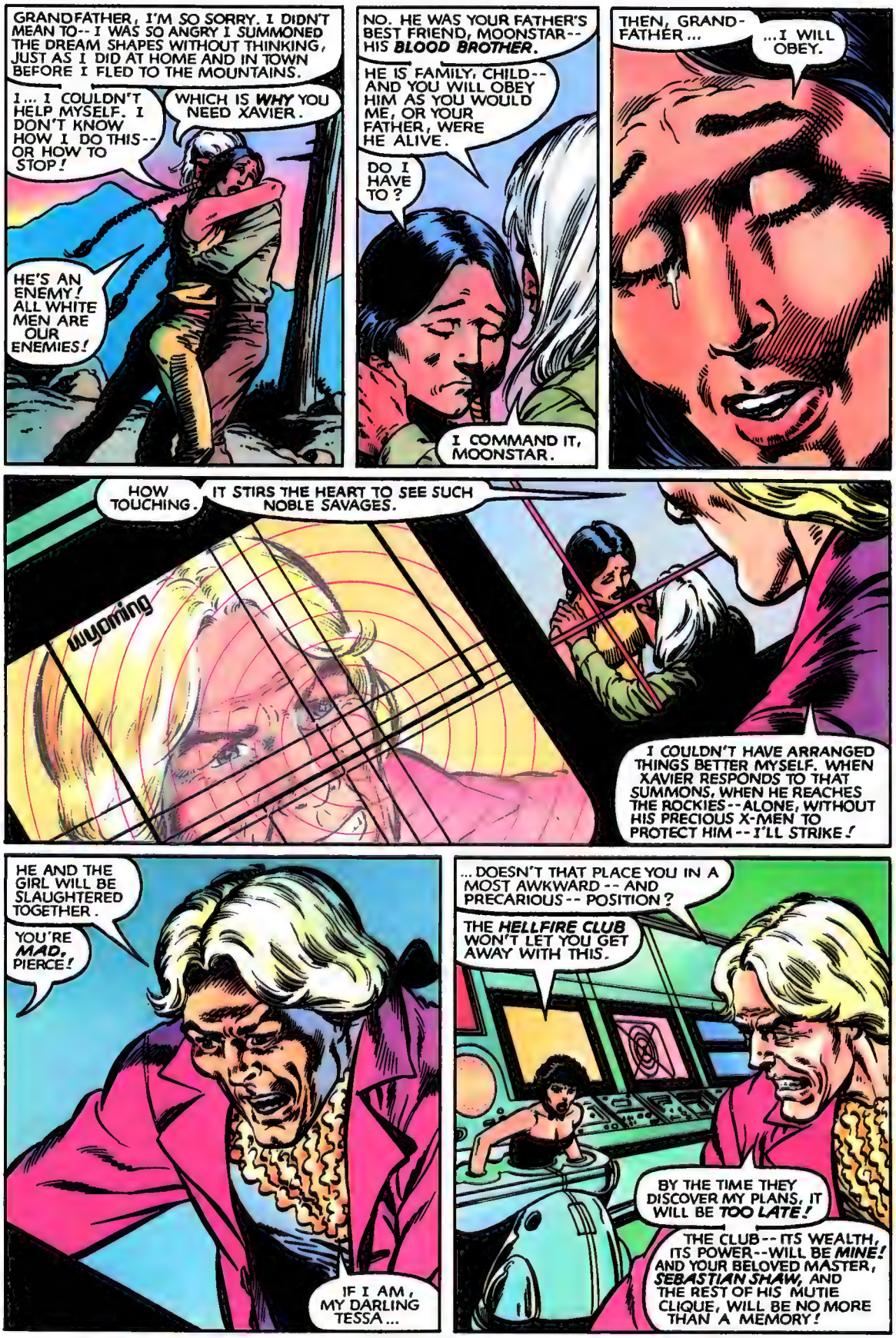

CAMERON COUNTY, KENTUCKY, IN THE HEART OF THE APPALACHIAN COAL FIELDS.
THESE ARE DEEP MINES, SUNK STRAIGHT DOWN INTO THE EARTH OR SIDEWAYS INTO THE GUTS OF THESE ANCIENT MOUNTAINS.
IT'S A HARD LAND, A HARD WAY OF LIFE-- AND IT NURTURES AN EQUALLY TOUGH BREED OF MEN, WHO START YOUNG AND GROW UP FAST.
ONE SUCH IS SAM GUTHRIE...
...AGE 16...
...BEGINNING HIS FIRST SHIFT AT PIERCE-CONSOLIDATED #7.
SAM, AH HEARD 'BOUT YORE PA PASSIN' ON, FROM THE "BLACK LUNG." AH JUST WANTED T' OFFER MAH SYMPATHIES.
THANKS, Mr. LEWIS. THAT'S KIND O' YOU.
EV'RYTHIN' OKAY WITH YORE MAMA?
SHE'S COPIN', SIR, BEST SHE CAN. WE ALL ARE. PA HAD A PENSION, BUT WITH THE INFLATION AN' ALL, IT DON'T COME NEAR PAYIN' THE BILLS.
THINK SAFETY
THINK SAFETY
AN' MA'S TOO PROUD T' GO ON WELFARE.
MY PA'S DREAM'S STILL GOOD, Mr. LEWIS. MAYBE IT WON'T COME TRUE FOR ME...
...BUT IT WILL FOR ONE O' MY BROTHERS OR SISTERS, I'LL SEE TO THAT.
AH'M A BIT SURPRISED T' SEE YOU HERE, BOY. AH THOUGHT YOU HAD A SCHOLARSHIP OR SOMETHIN'. AH 'MEMBER YORE DADDY SAYIN' HOW PROUD HE WAS, T' KNOW HIS SON WAS GOIN' T' COLLEGE.
I CAN'T LEAVE HERE, SIR, KNOWIN' MY FAMILY HASN'T GOT FOOD T' EAT. I'M MAN O' THE HOUSE NOW. IT'S MY JOB TO PROVIDE FOR MAMA AN' THE LITTLE ONES.

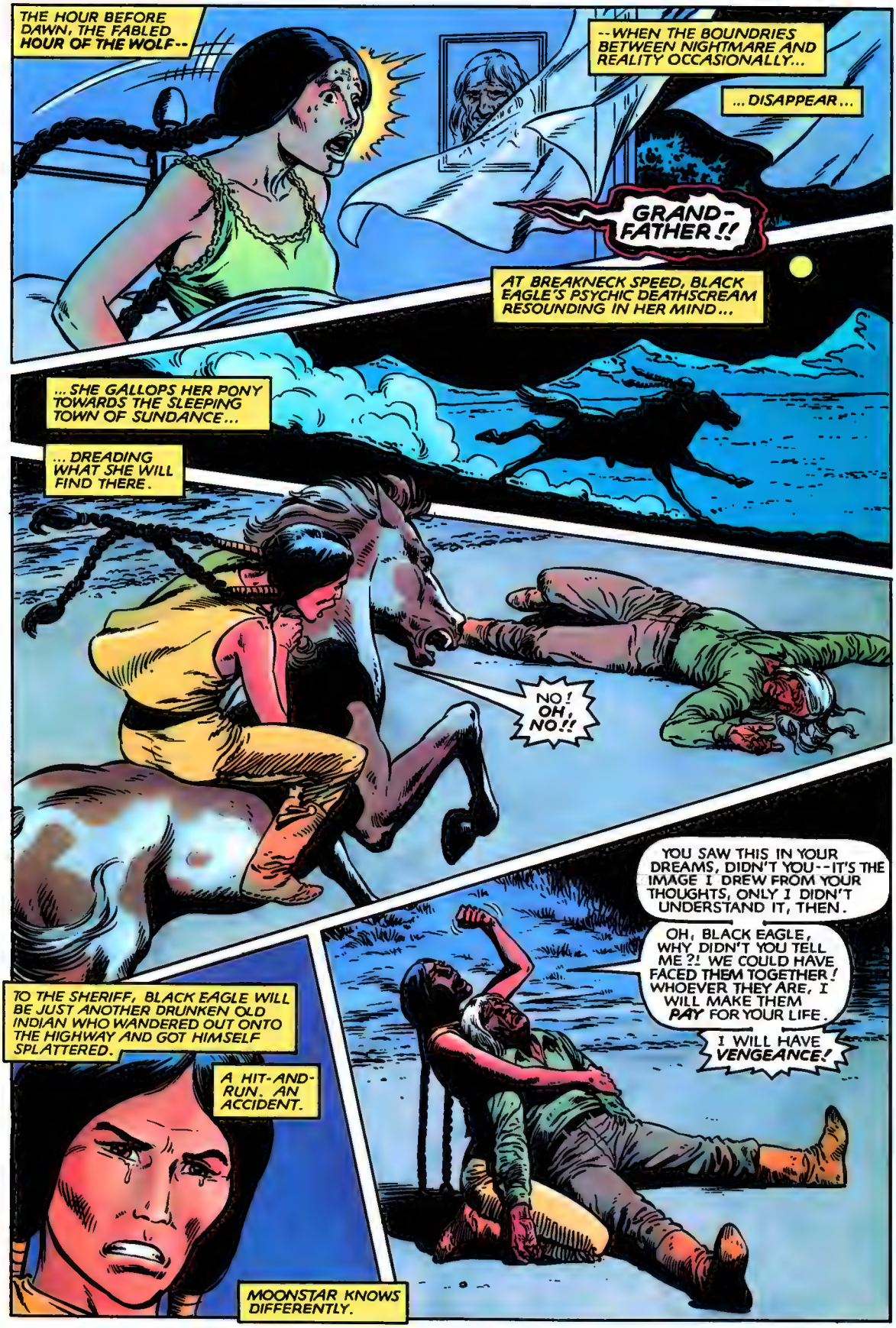

SAM SPENDS MOST OF HIS SHIFT GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH MEN AND MACHINES, LEARNING THE ROPES OF THE JOB HE KNOWS HAS JUST BECOME HIS LIFE'S-WORK. AS THE DAY WEARS ON...
... HE FINDS HIMSELF HATING HIS FATHER...
... FOR OFFERING A DREAM OF SOMETHING BETTER, ONLY TO SNATCH IT FROM SAM'S HAND AS IT WAS ABOUT TO COME TRUE.
AND WITH THESE TANGLED EMOTIONS OF HATE AND LOVE AND GRIEF COMES A SENSE OF SHAME, FOR FEELING THIS WAY.
AND THEN, WITHOUT WARNING...
CAVE-IN!
EVERY-BODY OUT!!
Mr. LEWIS! HE'S PINNED!
LEAVE HIM, BOY! SAVE YOURSELF!
GET OUTTA HERE, SAM! I'M DONE FOR!
I'M STAYIN', Mr. LEWIS!
YOU CRAZY--! YOU'RE TOM GUTHRIE'S SON, ALRIGHT, THE SPITTIN' IMAGE--MORE GUTS THAN BRAINS.
CAN YOU MOVE? IF WE SHIFT THIS TIMBER...
IT'S TOO LATE! THE ROOF'S COLLAPSIN'!
NO!!
FEAR TURNS HIS SOUL TO ICE.
ADRENALIN SURGES LIKE MOLTEN FIRE THROUGH HIS BLOODSTREAM.
THINGS BEGIN TO HAPPEN.

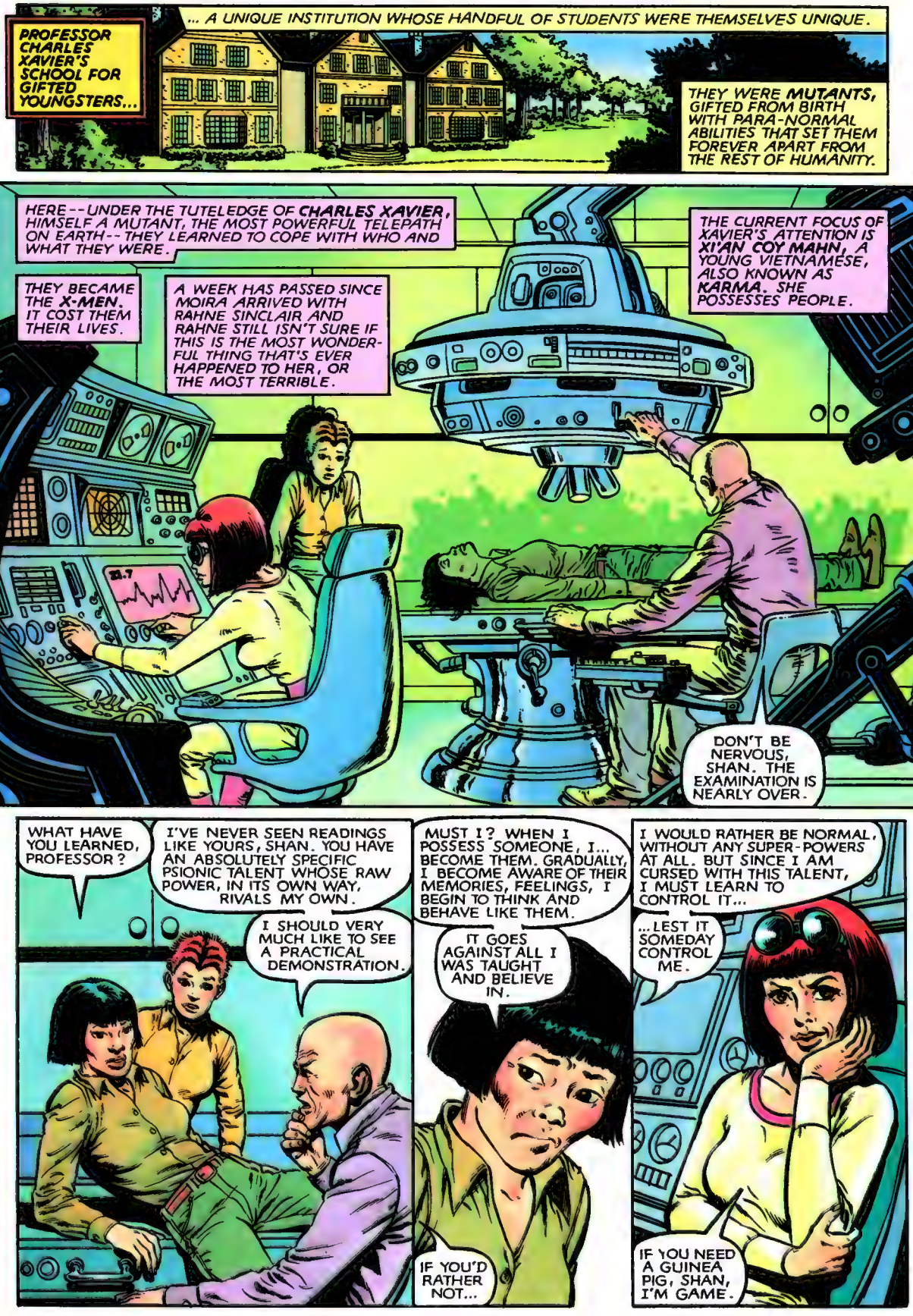

HIS EYES GLOW...
... RAW ENERGY BURSTING ABOUT HIM, BUILDING IN INTENSITY...
... UNTIL...
KA-WHOOMM!
FUMP
GUYS, OVER HERE! IT'S FRANK LEWIS AN' SAM GUTHRIE!
AH... AH'M ALIVE!
IT'S A MIRACLE!
IT SURE IS, Mr. LEWIS.
IT WAS ME--I DID IT. MY LEGS SEEMED TO EXPLODE, AN' THEN I WAS SMASHIN' OUT THE MOUNTAIN LIKE A CANNONBALL. BUT I'M NORMAL NOW. I LOOK FINE, EVEN MY CLOTHES.
HOW DID I DO THAT?!
ANOTHER ONE, MUCH CLOSER TO HOME. SPLENDID.
A POWER SUCH AS HIS COULD BE USEFUL TO ME. AND THEN, WHEN HE HAS SERVED HIS PURPOSE...
... HE CAN FOLLOW YOUNG daCOSTA INTO THE GRAVE.

THE MEDICINE BOW MOUNTAINS, NEAR THE TOWN OF SUNDANCE, COLORADO...
SHE SITS IN SILENT HARMONY WITH THE WORLD, AS IT SPINS TOWARD ANOTHER DAWN.
SHE TREASURES THESE IDYLLIC INTERLUDES--WHEN SHE IS AT PEACE WITH HERSELF AND TRULY HAPPY. HER SECRET TERROR IS THAT, OF LATE, THEY ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY RARE.
RRROW?
Hmnh?
HELLO, RIDGE-RUNNER. HOW ARE YOU, FUZZY OLD THING? YES, I'M PLEASED TO SEE YOU, TOO.
THE CAT'S THOUGHTS ARE UNCOMPLICATED, PURE. HE HAS FED, HE IS WITH THE HUMAN HE ADORES. HE IS CONTENT.
HER THOUGHTS ARE THE SAME.
PRRRR
THE TWO BECOME ONE.
IN RAPPORT AS THEY ARE, BOTH BECOME AWARE OF THE INTRUDER SIMULTANEOUSLY.
SNIF
THE CAT RECOGNIZES THE SCENT--MAN!
HE BOLTS...
...AND THE GIRL--THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS STILL INTERMIXED WITH HIS--IS HARD PRESSED NOT TO FOLLOW.
RIDGE-RUNNER--STAY!

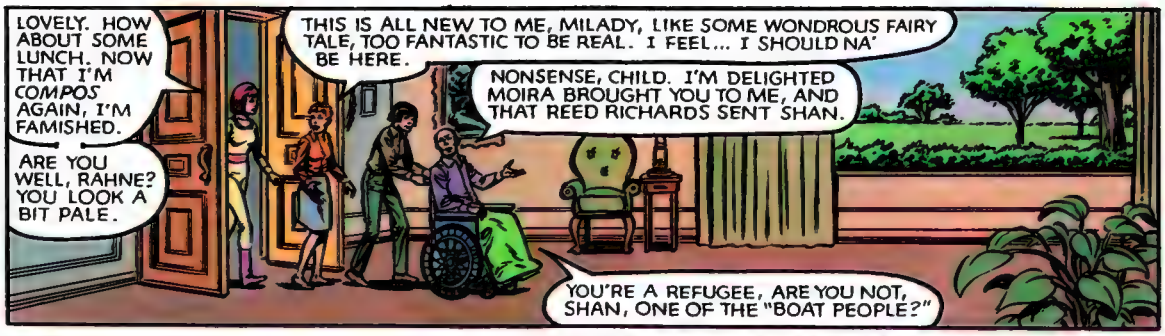
WHO IS IT?! I SHOULD HAVE SENSED HIS APPROACH LONG BEFORE RIDGE-RUNNER CAUGHT HIS SCENT.
MOONSTAR--??
BLACK EAGLE!
GRAND-FATHER!!
YOU LOOK WELL, CHILD. I AM GLAD.
COME. WALK WITH ME, MOONSTAR. WE MUST TALK.
GRAND-FATHER, YOU SOUND SO SERIOUS. IS ANYTHING WRONG?
THE TIME HAS COME FOR YOU TO LEAVE THESE MOUNTAINS.
I HAVE SUMMONED A MAN, A TEACHER. YOU WILL GO WITH HIM, TO LEARN HOW BEST TO USE THE GIFTS GIVEN YOU BY THE GREAT SPIRIT, YOUR POWERS OF THE MIND.
WHY CAN'T YOU TEACH ME? WHY DO I HAVE TO GO AWAY?!
I AM AN OLD MAN, AND MY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL ARE NOTHING COMPARED TO HIS.
HE LIVES IN NEW YORK. HIS NAME IS CHARLES XAVIER.
A WHITE!?!
YOU WOULD SEND ME TO AN ANGLO?!?
NO! I WON'T DO IT! I WON'T GO!
HER RAGE GIVES HER SUDDEN, UNEXPECTED STRENGTH. IT CATCHES BLACK EAGLE BY SURPRISE AND, FOR A MOMENT, HIS NATURAL PSYCHIC DEFENSES FALTER.
A BEATING...
...A DEATH...


GRANDFATHER, I'M SO SORRY. I DIDN'T MEAN TO-- I WAS SO ANGRY I SUMMONED THE DREAM SHAPES WITHOUT THINKING, JUST AS I DID AT HOME AND IN TOWN BEFORE I FLED TO THE MOUNTAINS.
I... I COULDN'T HELP MYSELF. I DON'T KNOW HOW I DO THIS-- OR HOW TO STOP!
WHICH IS WHY YOU NEED XAVIER.
HE'S AN ENEMY! ALL WHITE MEN ARE OUR ENEMIES!
NO. HE WAS YOUR FATHER'S BEST FRIEND, MOONSTAR-- HIS BLOOD BROTHER.
HE IS FAMILY, CHILD-- AND YOU WILL OBEY HIM AS YOU WOULD ME, OR YOUR FATHER, WERE HE ALIVE.
DO I HAVE TO?
I COMMAND IT, MOONSTAR.
THEN, GRAND-FATHER...
...I WILL OBEY.
HOW TOUCHING.
IT STIRS THE HEART TO SEE SUCH NOBLE SAVAGES.
WYOMING
I COULDN'T HAVE ARRANGED THINGS BETTER MYSELF. WHEN XAVIER RESPONDS TO THAT SUMMONS, WHEN HE REACHES THE ROCKIES--ALONE, WITHOUT HIS PRECIOUS X-MEN TO PROTECT HIM--I'LL STRIKE!
HE AND THE GIRL WILL BE SLAUGHTERED TOGETHER.
YOU'RE MAD, PIERCE!
IF I AM, MY DARLING TESSA...
...DOESN'T THAT PLACE YOU IN A MOST AWKWARD -- AND PRECARIOUS -- POSITION?
THE HELLFIRE CLUB WON'T LET YOU GET AWAY WITH THIS.
BY THE TIME THEY DISCOVER MY PLANS, IT WILL BE TOO LATE!
THE CLUB -- ITS WEALTH, ITS POWER--WILL BE MINE! AND YOUR BELOVED MASTER, SEBASTIAN SHAW, AND THE REST OF HIS MUTIE CLIQUE, WILL BE NO MORE THAN A MEMORY!


THE HOUR BEFORE DAWN, THE FABLED HOUR OF THE WOLF--
--WHEN THE BOUNDRIES BETWEEN NIGHTMARE AND REALITY OCCASIONALLY...
... DISAPPEAR...
GRAND-FATHER!!
AT BREAKNECK SPEED, BLACK EAGLE'S PSYCHIC DEATHSCREAM RESOUNDING IN HER MIND...
... SHE GALLOPS HER PONY TOWARDS THE SLEEPING TOWN OF SUNDANCE...
... DREADING WHAT SHE WILL FIND THERE.
NO! OH, NO!!
YOU SAW THIS IN YOUR DREAMS, DIDN'T YOU--IT'S THE IMAGE I DREW FROM YOUR THOUGHTS, ONLY I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND IT, THEN.
OH, BLACK EAGLE, WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?! WE COULD HAVE FACED THEM TOGETHER! WHOEVER THEY ARE, I WILL MAKE THEM PAY FOR YOUR LIFE.
I WILL HAVE VENGEANCE!
TO THE SHERIFF, BLACK EAGLE WILL BE JUST ANOTHER DRUNKEN OLD INDIAN WHO WANDERED OUT ONTO THE HIGHWAY AND GOT HIMSELF SPLATTERED.
A HIT-AND-RUN. AN ACCIDENT.
MOONSTAR KNOWS DIFFERENTLY.

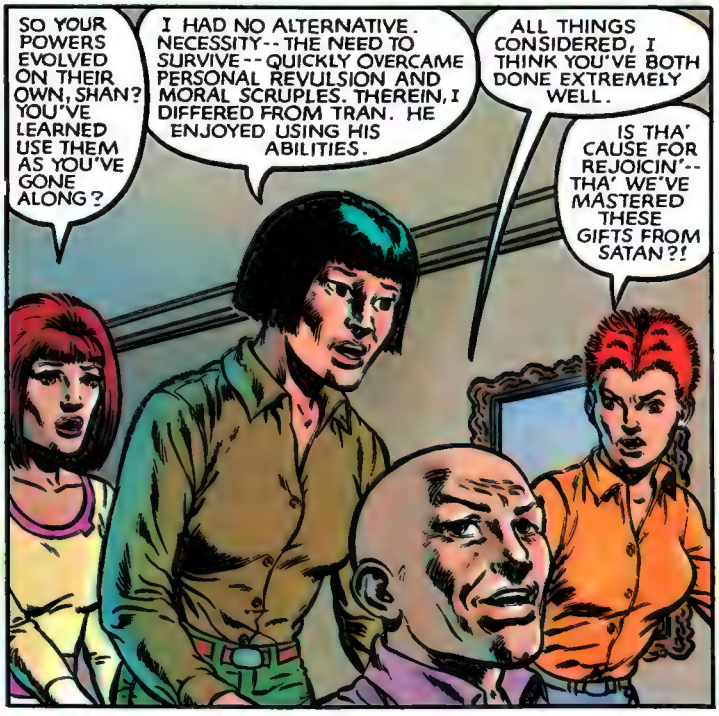

PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER'S SCHOOL FOR GIFTED YOUNGSTERS...
... A UNIQUE INSTITUTION WHOSE HANDFUL OF STUDENTS WERE THEMSELVES UNIQUE.
THEY WERE MUTANTS, GIFTED FROM BIRTH WITH PARA-NORMAL ABILITIES THAT SET THEM FOREVER APART FROM THE REST OF HUMANITY.
HERE--UNDER THE TUTELEDGE OF CHARLES XAVIER, HIMSELF A MUTANT, THE MOST POWERFUL TELEPATH ON EARTH--THEY LEARNED TO COPE WITH WHO AND WHAT THEY WERE.
THEY BECAME THE X-MEN. IT COST THEM THEIR LIVES.
A WEEK HAS PASSED SINCE MOIRA ARRIVED WITH RAHNE SINCLAIR AND RAHNE STILL ISN'T SURE IF THIS IS THE MOST WONDERFUL THING THAT'S EVER HAPPENED TO HER, OR THE MOST TERRIBLE.
THE CURRENT FOCUS OF XAVIER'S ATTENTION IS XI'AN COY MAHN, A YOUNG VIETNAMESE, ALSO KNOWN AS KARMA. SHE POSSESSES PEOPLE.
DON'T BE NERVOUS, SHAN. THE EXAMINATION IS NEARLY OVER.
WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED, PROFESSOR?
I'VE NEVER SEEN READINGS LIKE YOURS, SHAN. YOU HAVE AN ABSOLUTELY SPECIFIC PSIONIC TALENT WHOSE RAW POWER, IN ITS OWN WAY, RIVALS MY OWN.
I SHOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO SEE A PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATION.
MUST I? WHEN I POSSESS SOMEONE, I... BECOME THEM. GRADUALLY, I BECOME AWARE OF THEIR MEMORIES, FEELINGS, I BEGIN TO THINK AND BEHAVE LIKE THEM.
IT GOES AGAINST ALL I WAS TAUGHT AND BELIEVE IN.
IF YOU'D RATHER NOT...
I WOULD RATHER BE NORMAL, WITHOUT ANY SUPER-POWERS AT ALL. BUT SINCE I AM CURSED WITH THIS TALENT, I MUST LEARN TO CONTROL IT...
...LEST IT SOMEDAY CONTROL ME.
IF YOU NEED A GUINEA PIG, SHAN, I'M GAME.

YOU ARE VERY BRAVE, Dr. MacTAGGERT. I AM AFRAID THERE WILL BE SOME INITIAL DISCOMFORT...
=OH!=
... BUT IT WILL SOON PASS.
IS THIS SATISFACTORY, PROFESSOR?
LOOK A' HER EYES! AN' HER VOICE-- IT SOUNDS LIKE SHAN'S!
MY OWN BODY IS CAPABLE OF INDEPENDENT ACTION...
... ALTHOUGH IT IS GREATLY WEAKENED.
MY CONTROL OVER THE HOST-BODY IS ABSOLUTE.
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO LADY MOIRA?! LEAVE HER ALONE!
RAHNE, I MEAN NO HARM!
PROFESSOR--!
GRRRR
RAHNE, STOP THIS!
RETURN TO HUMAN FORM, AT ONCE!
I... I'M SORRY, SIR. I WAS SO FRIGHTENED, I COULD NA' HELP MYSELF.
DID YOU SPEAK ALOUD, PROFESSOR? I HEARD WORDS-- BUT NA' WI' MY EARS.
I SPOKE TELEPATHICALLY.
I'M RELEASING Dr. MacTAGGERT, PROFESSOR.
HOW DO YOU FEEL, MOIRA?
A LITTLE MUZZY-HEADED, BUT OTHERWISE FINE. WHAT DID I MISS?
YOU DON'T REMEMBER? FASCINATING. THE SENSORS INDICATE A COMPLETE CESSATION OF YOUR HIGHER BRAIN FUNCTIONS...
... DURING THE PERIOD SHAN POSSESSED YOU. IN EFFECT, YOU CEASED TO EXIST.


LOVELY. HOW ABOUT SOME LUNCH. NOW THAT I'M *COMPOS* AGAIN, I'M FAMISHED.
ARE YOU WELL, RAHNE? YOU LOOK A BIT PALE.
THIS IS ALL NEW TO ME, MILADY, LIKE SOME WONDROUS FAIRY TALE, TOO FANTASTIC TO BE REAL. I FEEL... I SHOULD NA' BE HERE.
NONSENSE, CHILD. I'M DELIGHTED MOIRA BROUGHT YOU TO ME, AND THAT REED RICHARDS SENT SHAN.
YOU'RE A REFUGEE, ARE YOU NOT, SHAN, ONE OF THE "BOAT PEOPLE?"

OUI, M'SIEU. MY FATHER WAS A COLONEL IN THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE ARMY, MY MOTHER A TEACHER. THEY WERE BOTH KILLED BY THAI PIRATES DURING OUR ESCAPE. MY YOUNGER BROTHER AND SISTER--***LEONG*** AND ***NGA***--AND I ARRIVED IN AMERICA A YEAR AGO. WE FOUND A PLACE TO LIVE IN NEW YORK, I SECURED EMPLOYMENT AND WE BEGAN TO RESTORE A SEMBLANCE OF ORDER TO OUR LIVES.
THERE'S A GREAT DEAL SHE ISN'T TELLING US. I WONDER WHY? A NATURAL RETICENCE--OR HAS SHE SOMETHING TO HIDE?

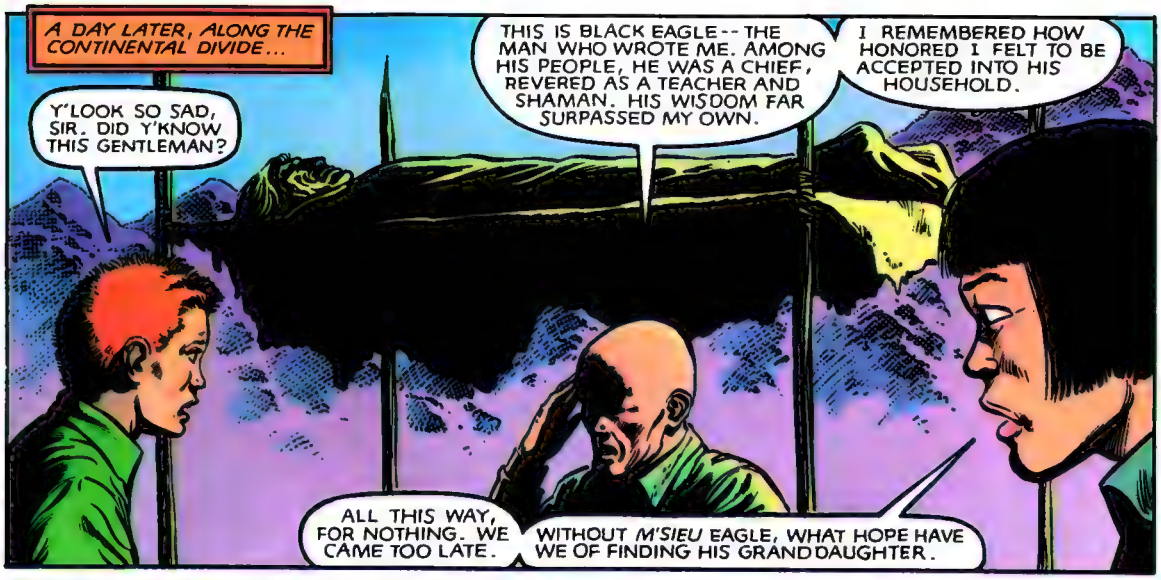
I HAD A TWIN BROTHER, ***TRAN*** --A MUTANT LIKE MYSELF, WITH THE SAME ABILITIES. HE... DIED.
WE HAD ONE OTHER RELATIVE, LIVING OUTSIDE VIETNAM. OUR UNCLE, ***NGUYEN NGOC COY.*** MY FATHER NEITHER LIKED NOR TRUSTED HIM--WITH GOOD REASON--AND NEITHER DO I.

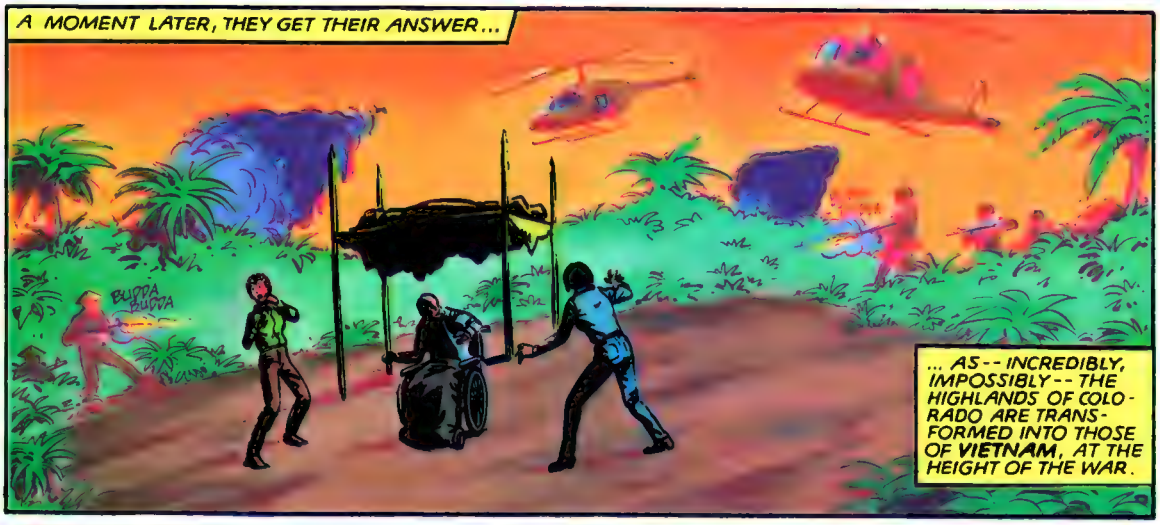

SO YOUR POWERS EVOLVED ON THEIR OWN, SHAN? YOU'VE LEARNED USE THEM AS YOU'VE GONE ALONG?
I HAD NO ALTERNATIVE. NECESSITY--THE NEED TO SURVIVE--QUICKLY OVERCAME PERSONAL REVULSION AND MORAL SCRUPLES. THEREIN, I DIFFERED FROM TRAN. HE ENJOYED USING HIS ABILITIES.
ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, I THINK YOU'VE BOTH DONE EXTREMELY WELL.
IS THA' CAUSE FOR REJOICIN'--THA' WE'VE MASTERED THESE GIFTS FROM SATAN?!

YOUR POWERS HAVE NOTHING WHATSOEVER TO DO WITH SATAN, RAHNE. THEY ARE THINGS OF NATURE, NO DIFFERENT FROM HANDS OR HEART OR BRAIN.
AND LIKE ALL SUCH TALENTS, THESE MUST BE SHAPED AND HONED.

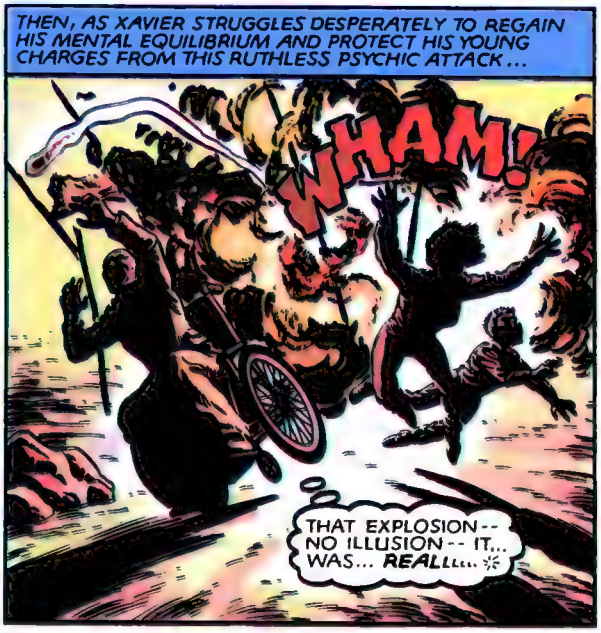
PEOPLE WERE NOTHING TO TRAN, MERE PUPPETS. I DO NOT WISH TO BECOME LIKE HIM--YET I FEEL THE SAME TEMPTATION WITHIN MYSELF.
HELP ME, PROFESSOR. TEACH ME WHAT I MUST KNOW.
I...
I... CANNOT.
WILL NOT, Y'MEAN. ARE YOU AFRAID, CHARLEY?
I AM TIRED, MOIRA. OF GATHERING YOUNG PEOPLE--CHILDREN--OF TRAINING THEM, ONLY TO SEND THEM TO THEIR DEATHS. THERE'S TOO MUCH BLOOD ON MY HANDS ALREADY.
I WANT NO MORE.
DENY THESE TWO AND YOU DENY EVERYTHING YOU'VE EVER BELIEVED IN.
AYE, X-MEN HAVE DIED--AN' WILL CONTINUE TO DIE, BECAUSE THAT'S THE NATURE OF THEIR JOB. THEY'RE HEROES.
BUT THE TEAM WASN'T FOUNDED--YOU DINNAE BEGIN YOUR LIFE'S-WORK--MERELY TO COMBAT EVIL MUTANTS.
THE DREAM, CHARLEY, WAS TO HELP MUTANTS LEARN TO LIVE WITH THEIR POWERS. AN' TO HELP SOCIETY LEARN TO ACCEPT THEM. SHAN AND RAHNE NEED GUIDANCE ONLY YOU CAN PROVIDE. CAN YOU REFUSE THEM?
I WANT TO. THE X-MEN WERE MY FAMILY.
LOSING THEM IS... UNBEARABLE. *
HARD AS IT MAY BE TO ACCEPT, THE X-MEN THEMSELVES ARE FAR LESS IMPORTANT THAN THE DREAM WHICH BROUGHT THEM TOGETHER.
TO GIVE UP NOW WOULD MAKE THEIR LIVES--THEIR SACRIFICE--MEANINGLESS.
YOU'RE A TOUGH WOMAN, MOIRA.
LIKE YOU, CHARLEY, ME OLD LOVE, I'M A FIGHTER. IT'S MY DREAM, TOO--PAID FOR IN SWEAT, TEARS... AN' BLOOD. SO LONG AS I'M ABLE, I WON'T LET IT DIE.
ALL RIGHT, YOUNG LADIES, I'LL DO WHAT I CAN.
AND LET'S ALL PRAY WE'VE MADE THE RIGHT DECISION.
*THE X-MEN WERE KIDNAPPED BY THE ALIEN BROOD IN X-MEN #161 -- LOUISE.

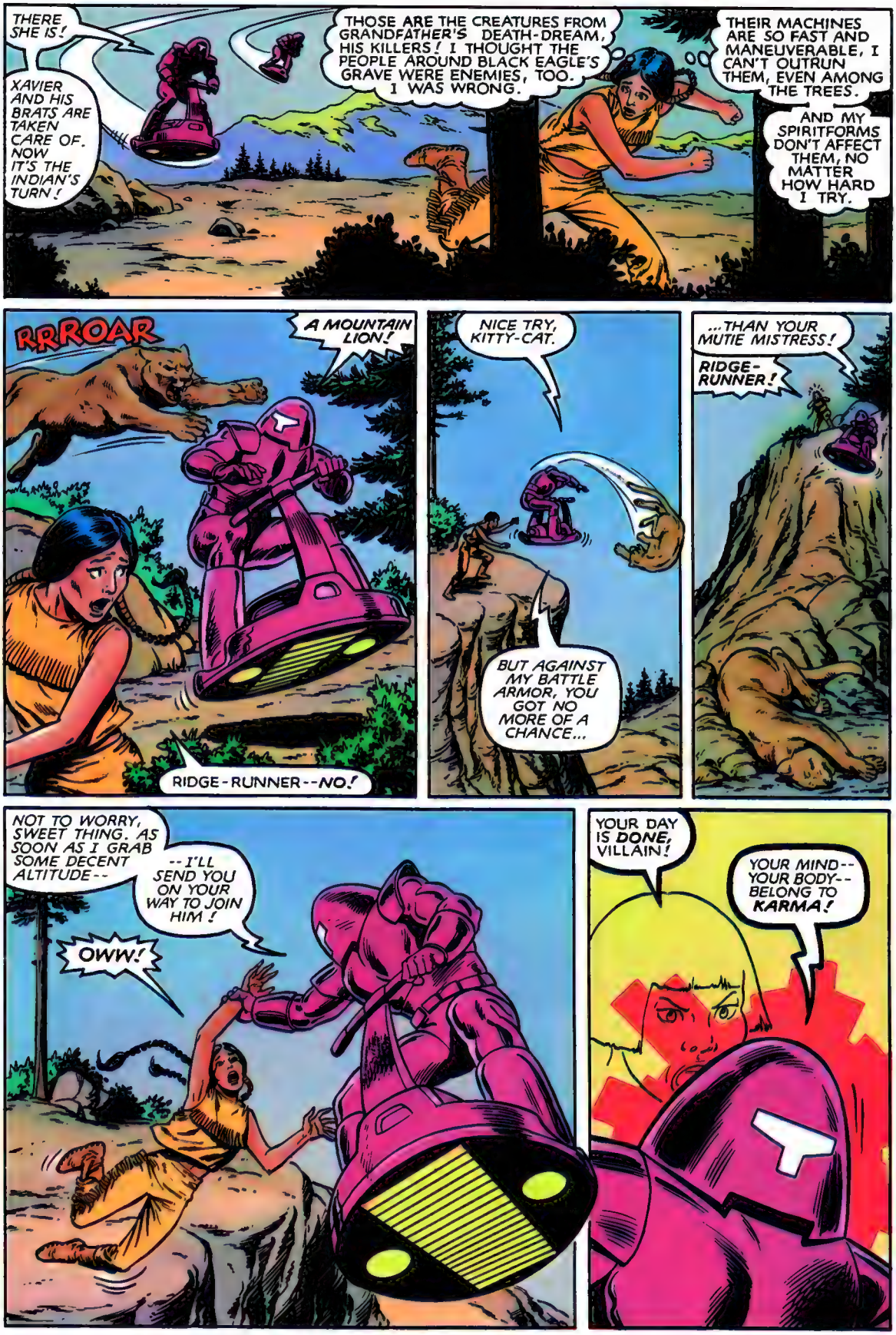
MILADY-- THE DOORBELL!
I HEAR IT, RAHNE. AN' STOP CALLIN' ME "MILADY." MY NAME'S MOIRA.
DING DONG
YES, MILADY.
I COULD CALL HER "DOCTOR," I SUPPOSE. BUT SHE'S A KINROSS, HEIR TO THE DOMAIN-- WHILE I'M AN ORPHAN, WARD O' THE CHURCH 'TIL LADY MOIRA HAD HERSEL' NAMED M' GUARDIAN.
SHE TREATS ME AS AN EQUAL, BUT WE'RE NOT. AND WE CANNA' EVER BE.
ALL THIS SOUNDS WONDERFUL, PROFESSOR, BUT I HAVE A PROBLEM. I MUST CARE FOR MY BROTHER AND SISTER. BETWEEN MY JOB AND YOUR SCHOOL, I SHALL HAVE NO TIME LEFT FOR THEM.
EASILY SOLVED, SHAN. COME TO WORK FOR ME. I NEED SOMEONE TO HELP ME RUN THE SCHOOL-- NOW THAT I SEEM TO BE STARTING OVER AGAIN. YOU'RE BRIGHT, WELL-EDUCATED, ARTICULATE, MULTI-LINGUAL-- A PERFECT CHOICE.
YOUR SALARY AND BENEFITS WILL BE MORE THAN ADEQUATE.
AND YOU'LL BE ABLE TO WORK AND STUDY AT THE SAME TIME.
YOUR OFFER IS MOST GENEROUS. I ACCEPT.
A LETTER, CHARLES-- FROM COLORADO. SPECIAL DELIVERY.
Sigh.
TODAY'S EVENTS SEEM TO BE GATHERING A SOMEWHAT INEXORABLE AND IRRESISTIBLE MOMENTUM. THIS IS FROM THE FATHER OF AN OLD ARMY FRIEND.
BLACK EAGLE'S GRAND-DAUGHTER IS EVIDENTLY A MUTANT. HE ASKS MY HELP. URGENTLY.
ANYONE FOR A TRIP OUT WEST?

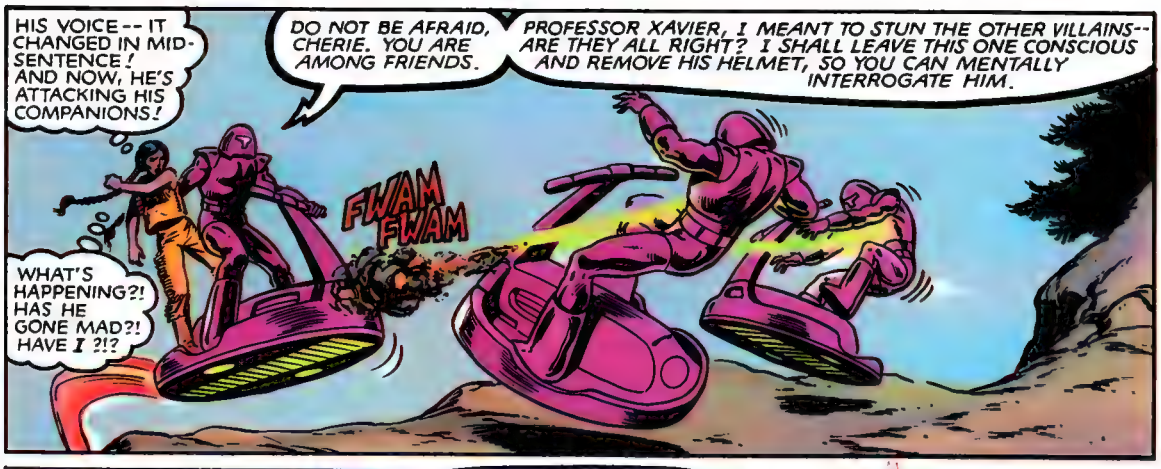

A DAY LATER, ALONG THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE...
Y'LOOK SO SAD, SIR. DID Y'KNOW THIS GENTLEMAN?
THIS IS BLACK EAGLE -- THE MAN WHO WROTE ME. AMONG HIS PEOPLE, HE WAS A CHIEF, REVERED AS A TEACHER AND SHAMAN. HIS WISDOM FAR SURPASSED MY OWN.
I REMEMBERED HOW HONORED I FELT TO BE ACCEPTED INTO HIS HOUSEHOLD.
ALL THIS WAY, FOR NOTHING. WE CAME TOO LATE.
WITHOUT M'SIEU EAGLE, WHAT HOPE HAVE WE OF FINDING HIS GRANDDAUGHTER.


A MOMENT LATER, THEY GET THEIR ANSWER...
BUDDA BUDDA
... AS -- INCREDIBLY, IMPOSSIBLY -- THE HIGHLANDS OF COLORADO ARE TRANSFORMED INTO THOSE OF VIETNAM, AT THE HEIGHT OF THE WAR.

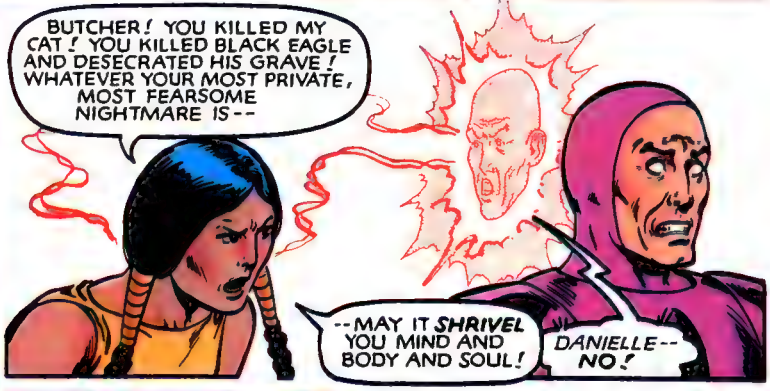
FOR XI'AN, IT IS HER MOST PRIMAL, PRIVATE TERROR -- TO BE THROWN BACK INTO THE NIGHTMARE THAT HAS DOMINATED HER LIFE FROM BIRTH.
IT IS MORE THAN SHE CAN BEAR.
NNNOOOOO!


THEN, AS XAVIER STRUGGLES DESPERATELY TO REGAIN HIS MENTAL EQUILIBRIUM AND PROTECT HIS YOUNG CHARGES FROM THIS RUTHLESS PSYCHIC ATTACK...
WHAM!
THAT EXPLOSION -- NO ILLUSION -- IT... WAS... REAL!!!!


THERE SHE IS!
XAVIER AND HIS BRATS ARE TAKEN CARE OF. NOW IT'S THE INDIAN'S TURN!
THOSE ARE THE CREATURES FROM GRANDFATHER'S DEATH-DREAM, HIS KILLERS! I THOUGHT THE PEOPLE AROUND BLACK EAGLE'S GRAVE WERE ENEMIES, TOO. I WAS WRONG.
THEIR MACHINES ARE SO FAST AND MANEUVERABLE, I CAN'T OUTRUN THEM, EVEN AMONG THE TREES.
AND MY SPIRITFORMS DON'T AFFECT THEM, NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY.
RRROAR
A MOUNTAIN LION!
RIDGE-RUNNER--NO!
NICE TRY, KITTY-CAT.
BUT AGAINST MY BATTLE ARMOR, YOU GOT NO MORE OF A CHANCE...
...THAN YOUR MUTIE MISTRESS!
RIDGE-RUNNER!
NOT TO WORRY, SWEET THING. AS SOON AS I GRAB SOME DECENT ALTITUDE--
--I'LL SEND YOU ON YOUR WAY TO JOIN HIM!
OWW!
YOUR DAY IS DONE, VILLAIN!
YOUR MIND--YOUR BODY--BELONG TO KARMA!


HIS VOICE -- IT CHANGED IN MID-SENTENCE! AND NOW, HE'S ATTACKING HIS COMPANIONS!
DO NOT BE AFRAID, CHERIE. YOU ARE AMONG FRIENDS.
PROFESSOR XAVIER, I MEANT TO STUN THE OTHER VILLAINS -- ARE THEY ALL RIGHT? I SHALL LEAVE THIS ONE CONSCIOUS AND REMOVE HIS HELMET, SO YOU CAN MENTALLY INTERROGATE HIM.
FWAM FWAM
WHAT'S HAPPENING?! HAS HE GONE MAD?! HAVE I ?!?

XAVIER?! HE'S THE MAN GRAND-FATHER SPOKE OF!
DID THIS MAN'S HELMET PROTECT HIM?! IF SO, HE COULD BE VULNERABLE TO MY SPIRITFORMS!

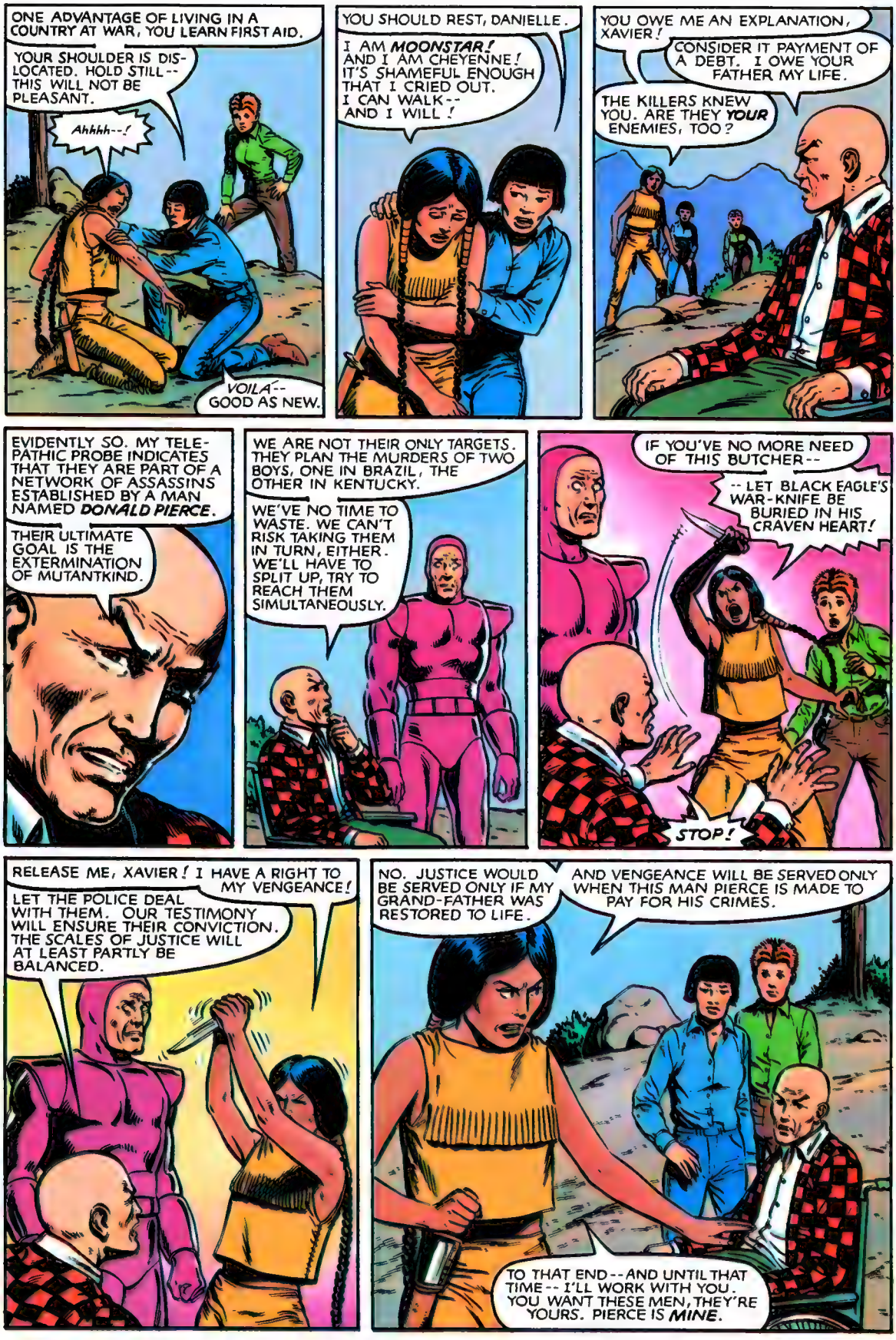

BUTCHER! YOU KILLED MY CAT! YOU KILLED BLACK EAGLE AND DESECRATED HIS GRAVE! WHATEVER YOUR MOST PRIVATE, MOST FEARSOME NIGHTMARE IS --
--MAY IT SHRIVEL YOU MIND AND BODY AND SOUL!
DANIELLE -- NO!

Y-YOU STOPPED ME! THAT'S NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE!
AND ONLY BLACK EAGLE AND I KNEW THAT NAME -- HOW DID YOU LEARN IT?!
I WAS WITH YOUR PARENTS WHEN THEY GAVE IT TO YOU, CHILD. I AM CHARLES XAVIER.
LIKE YOU, I AM A MUTANT. I HAVE COME TO HELP YOU, AS I PROMISED YOUR FATHER AND BLACK EAGLE I WOULD.

A LOT OF GOOD YOUR PROMISE DID GRAND-FATHER.
I NEED NOTHING FROM YOU, WHITE MAN. LEAVE MY HILLS. LEAVE ME!
TO LIVE ALONE, IN TERROR OF POWERS YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND AND CANNOT CONTROL? NO.

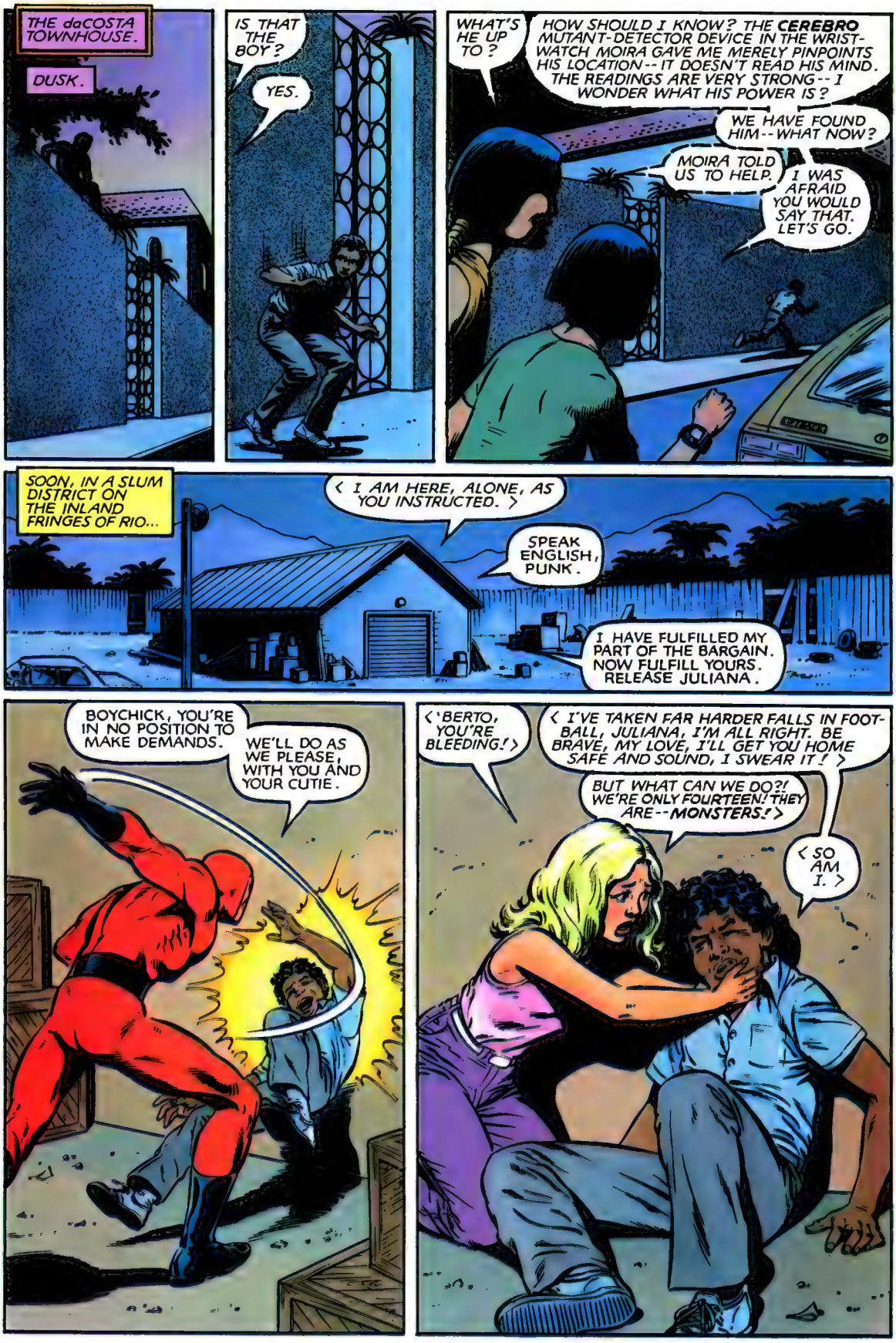
YOU HAVE EXTRAORDINARY GIFTS, BUT THEY CAN HARM YOU AS EASILY AS OTHERS. ONLY THROUGH PROPER TRAINING WILL YOU HAVE A CHANCE FOR SANITY AND SURVIVAL.
AND YOU WILL PROVIDE THIS... TRAINING?

YES.
WHY SHOULD I TRUST YOU -- ARRGH!
PROFESSOR -- SHE'S HURT!


ONE ADVANTAGE OF LIVING IN A COUNTRY AT WAR, YOU LEARN FIRST AID.
YOUR SHOULDER IS DISLOCATED. HOLD STILL -- THIS WILL NOT BE PLEASANT.
Ahhhh--!
VOILA' -- GOOD AS NEW.
YOU SHOULD REST, DANIELLE.
I AM MOONSTAR! AND I AM CHEYENNE! IT'S SHAMEFUL ENOUGH THAT I CRIED OUT. I CAN WALK -- AND I WILL!
YOU OWE ME AN EXPLANATION, XAVIER!
CONSIDER IT PAYMENT OF A DEBT. I OWE YOUR FATHER MY LIFE.
THE KILLERS KNEW YOU. ARE THEY YOUR ENEMIES, TOO?
EVIDENTLY SO. MY TELEPATHIC PROBE INDICATES THAT THEY ARE PART OF A NETWORK OF ASSASSINS ESTABLISHED BY A MAN NAMED DONALD PIERCE.
THEIR ULTIMATE GOAL IS THE EXTERMINATION OF MUTANTKIND.
WE ARE NOT THEIR ONLY TARGETS. THEY PLAN THE MURDERS OF TWO BOYS, ONE IN BRAZIL, THE OTHER IN KENTUCKY.
WE'VE NO TIME TO WASTE. WE CAN'T RISK TAKING THEM IN TURN, EITHER. WE'LL HAVE TO SPLIT UP, TRY TO REACH THEM SIMULTANEOUSLY.
IF YOU'VE NO MORE NEED OF THIS BUTCHER --
-- LET BLACK EAGLE'S WAR-KNIFE BE BURIED IN HIS CRAVEN HEART!
STOP!
RELEASE ME, XAVIER! I HAVE A RIGHT TO MY VENGEANCE!
LET THE POLICE DEAL WITH THEM. OUR TESTIMONY WILL ENSURE THEIR CONVICTION. THE SCALES OF JUSTICE WILL AT LEAST PARTLY BE BALANCED.
NO. JUSTICE WOULD BE SERVED ONLY IF MY GRAND-FATHER WAS RESTORED TO LIFE.
AND VENGEANCE WILL BE SERVED ONLY WHEN THIS MAN PIERCE IS MADE TO PAY FOR HIS CRIMES.
TO THAT END -- AND UNTIL THAT TIME -- I'LL WORK WITH YOU. YOU WANT THESE MEN, THEY'RE YOURS. PIERCE IS MINE.

THE REGENCY HOTEL, RIO DE JANIERO, THE NEXT DAY...
... WHERE XI'AN AND DANI HAVE ARRIVED WITH MOIRA MacTAGGERT.
307
POLICE!
NOBODY MOVE! YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!
WHAT'S THE MEANING O' THIS?! WE'VE DONE NOTHING WRONG.
YOU TELEPHONED SENHOR EMMANUAL daCOSTA, REGARDING HIS SON, ROBERTO.
WHACK!
ARE YOU NOT THEN AWARE OF AN ATTEMPT YESTERDAY TO ABDUCT THE BOY OR OF THE SUB-SEQUENT DISAPPEARANCE OF A YOUNG GIRL, A SCHOOL FRIEND, JULIANA SANDOVAL?
OF COURSE NOT!
WE DO NOT BELIEVE YOU, DOCTOR. AT HEADQUARTERS, WE WILL LEARN THE TRUTH.
TAKE THEM AWAY.
I'LL STOP THEM! I'LL--
A LOOK PASSES BETWEEN MOIRA AND XI'AN.
DON'T, DANI! LET ME!
... AND AN OFFICER IS INSTANTLY POSSESSED.
THE HAND-CUFFS ARE ON DANI'S AND MY WRISTS, BUT THEY ARE NOT LOCKED.
I WISH I COULD DO SOMETHING FOR MOIRA, BUT SHE DOES NOT SEEM TO WANT ME TO. WE CANNOT MAKE OUR BREAK HERE -- THERE IS TOO MUCH A CHANCE OF BEING CAUGHT. WE SHALL HAVE TO WAIT.

NOW, DANI!
RUN!
CRAK
WHAT ABOUT MOIRA?!
LEAVE ME! I'M THE ONE THE POLICE WANT! I'LL TRY TO CONVINCE THEM OF THE TRUTH!
IT'S THE daCOSTA BOY WHO'S IN DANGER. GET TO HIM BEFORE PIERCE'S GOONS DO! HELP HIM AND THE GIRL!
WE SHALL NOT FAIL YOU, DOCTOR.
SPAK
BY THE TIME XI'AN RELEASES HER HOLD ON THE POLICEMAN...
...BOTH GIRLS HAVE DISAPPEARED INTO THE CROWD.

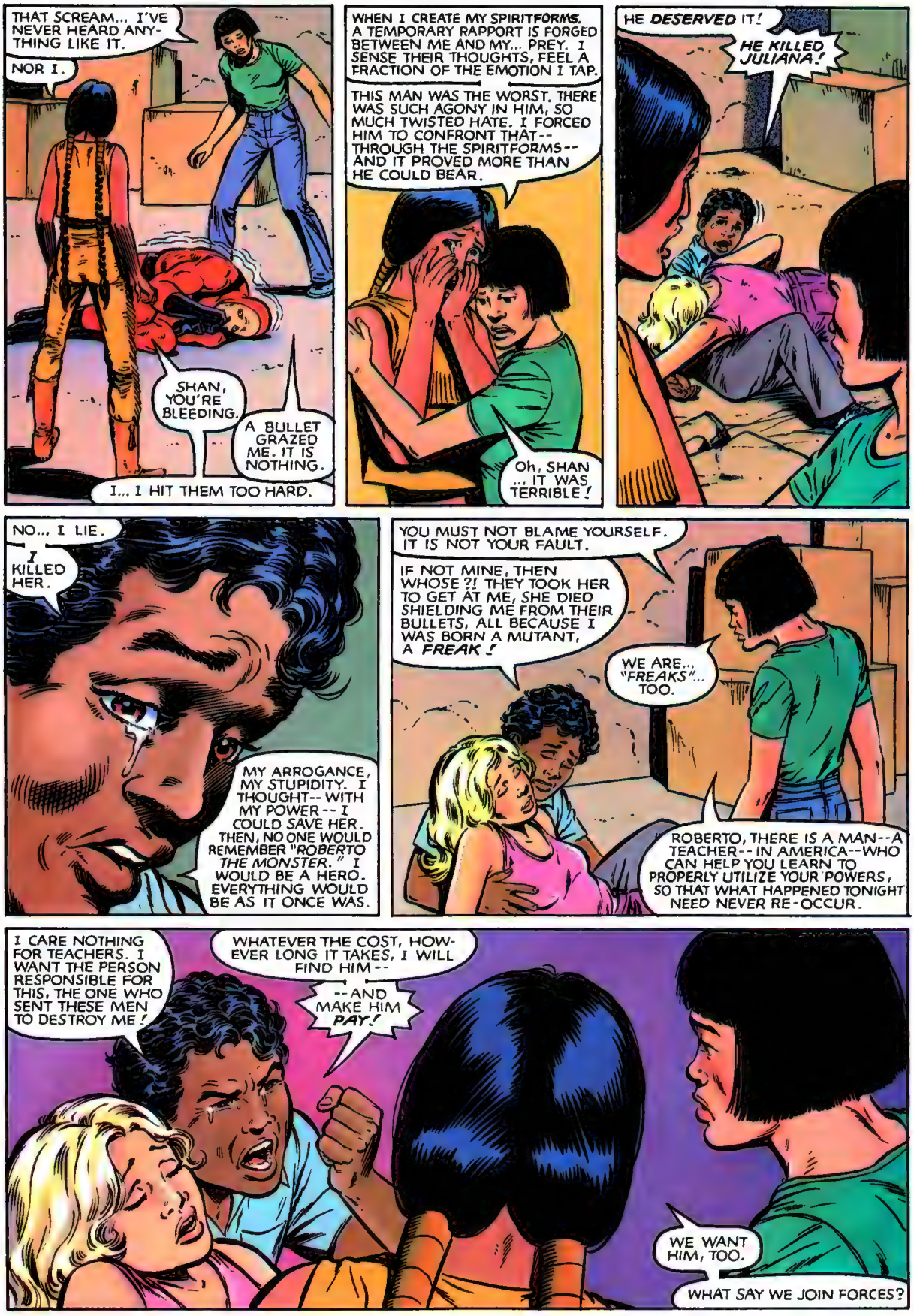

THE daCOSTA TOWNHOUSE.
DUSK.
IS THAT THE BOY?
YES.
WHAT'S HE UP TO?
HOW SHOULD I KNOW? THE CEREBRO MUTANT-DETECTOR DEVICE IN THE WRIST-WATCH MOIRA GAVE ME MERELY PINPOINTS HIS LOCATION--IT DOESN'T READ HIS MIND. THE READINGS ARE VERY STRONG--I WONDER WHAT HIS POWER IS?
WE HAVE FOUND HIM--WHAT NOW?
MOIRA TOLD US TO HELP.
I WAS AFRAID YOU WOULD SAY THAT. LET'S GO.
SOON, IN A SLUM DISTRICT ON THE INLAND FRINGES OF RIO...
< I AM HERE, ALONE, AS YOU INSTRUCTED. >
SPEAK ENGLISH, PUNK.
I HAVE FULFILLED MY PART OF THE BARGAIN. NOW FULFILL YOURS. RELEASE JULIANA.
BOYCHICK, YOU'RE IN NO POSITION TO MAKE DEMANDS.
WE'LL DO AS WE PLEASE, WITH YOU AND YOUR CUTIE.
<'BERTO, YOU'RE BLEEDING!>
< I'VE TAKEN FAR HARDER FALLS IN FOOTBALL, JULIANA, I'M ALL RIGHT. BE BRAVE, MY LOVE, I'LL GET YOU HOME SAFE AND SOUND, I SWEAR IT! >
BUT WHAT CAN WE DO?! WE'RE ONLY FOURTEEN! THEY ARE--MONSTERS!>
< SO AM I. >

HOW LARGE A RANSOM WILL YOU DEMAND FOR US ?
YOU MIS-UNDERSTAND, KIDDO. WE'RE NOT IN THIS FOR THE MONEY.
WE'RE IN THIS FOR THE BLOOD.
YOURS, TO BE PRECISE.
< BEHIND ME, JULIANA ! >
HOLY--!
WADE, SOMETHIN'S HAP'NIN'! HE'S CHANGIN'!
DON'T STAND AROUND GAWKING, YOU CLOWNS-- KILL HIM !
IF ANYONE IS TO DIE, SWINE--
--IT IS YOU!
KOOM!
CRIPES, WHO DOES HE THINK HE IS-- THE HULK?!
WHOULFFF!

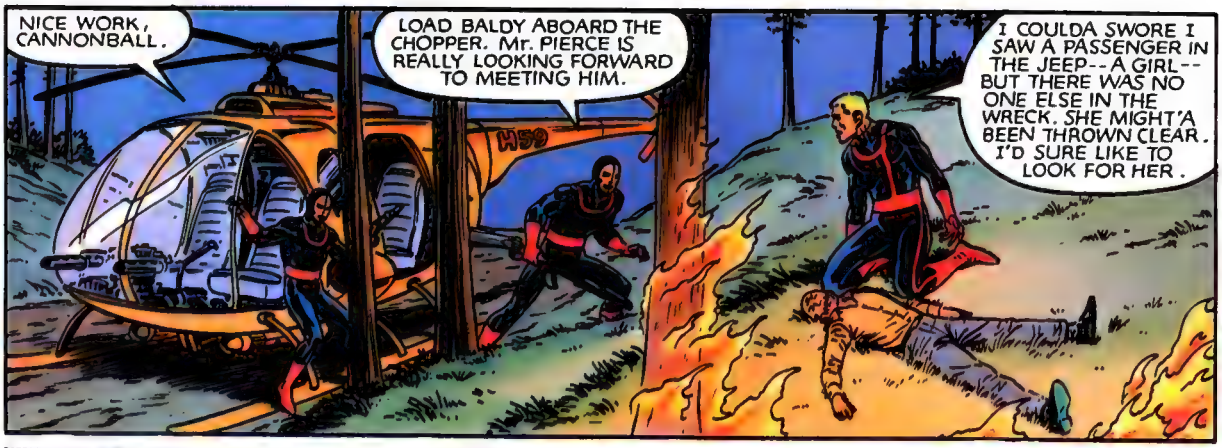
NOT BAD, KIDDO. YOU'D'A FLATTENED ANY NORMAL GUY.
BUT WE AIN'T NORMAL.
WE WERE ONCE--'TIL A MUTIE NAMED WOLVERINE CUT US TO RIBBONS-- NEAR KILLED US!
NOW WE'RE BIONIC-- PART MEN, PART MACHINE-- SUPER-FAST, AGILE, TOUGH AN' STRONG!
AN' WE HATE MUTIES!
CHOW
BYANG!
I HAVE DONE NOTHING TO YOU. I DO NOT EVEN KNOW YOU!
YOU EXIST, BUNKIE.
THAT'S ALL IT TAKES.
YOU ARE MADMEN!
UNNFFF!
< MY HEAD-- SPINNING. WHAT'S HAPPENING?! MY STRENGTH-- WHERE'S IT GONE?! >
SURPRISE, SURPRISE-- THE HOTSHOT'S RUN OUT OF GAS.
< THIS PIECE OF CONCRETE --SUDDENLY... SO HEAVY-- CANNOT HOLD IT! >
P-PLEASE-- DO WHAT YOU WISH WITH ME, BUT LET JULIANA GO.
I'D SAY "YES," MUTIE-- CONSIDERIN' IT'S YOUR LAST REQUEST--
--BUT I'D BE LYING.

Ahhrrr...
GOT HIM! ROBERTO, DO NOT BE AFRAID. RESCUE IS AT HAND.
< BLESSED SAINTS! >
IF THIS IS SOME TRICK...!
IT IS NOT. I SHALL EXPLAIN LATER. 'TIL THEN, TRUST ME AND DO AS I SAY. WHEN I DISTRACT THE OTHER ASSASSINS, YOU GRAB JULIANA AND RUN FOR THE ENTRANCE.
LOOK OUT!
NAIL HIM! HE'S GONE CRAZY!
I HIT THE DOOR, BUT MISSED THE MEN! THESE BIONICS REACT SO SWIFTLY, I CANNOT KEEP UP WITH THEM.
BLAM BLAM
I HAVE POSSESSED A BODY, DANI, BUT I DO NOT YET KNOW HOW TO USE IT PROPERLY-- AND I DOUBT I SHALL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN.
HOW 'BOUT I LEND A HAND.
IT WOULD BE APPRECIATED.
THE YOUNG CHEYENNE CONCENTRATES, PSYCHICALLY INTERFACING WITH THE SUBCONSCIOUS OF EACH GUNMAN TO PULL FROM IT THEIR MOST PERSONAL, PRIMAL, ABSOLUTE TERROR...
... AND TRANSFORMS IT INTO REALITY.
WOLVERINE!
IT CAN'T BE! PIERCE SWORE HE WAS AS GOOD AS DEAD!
YOU COLLECT THE KIDS. WHILE MY SPIRITFORM HOLDS THE GOONS' ATTENTION, I'LL CLOBBER 'EM!
WHUNEF!
NOT HIM, DANI! HE IS MY HOST!
NOW YOU TELL ME!
I HIT HIM PRETTY HARD. YOU'D BETTER ZAP SOMEONE ELSE!

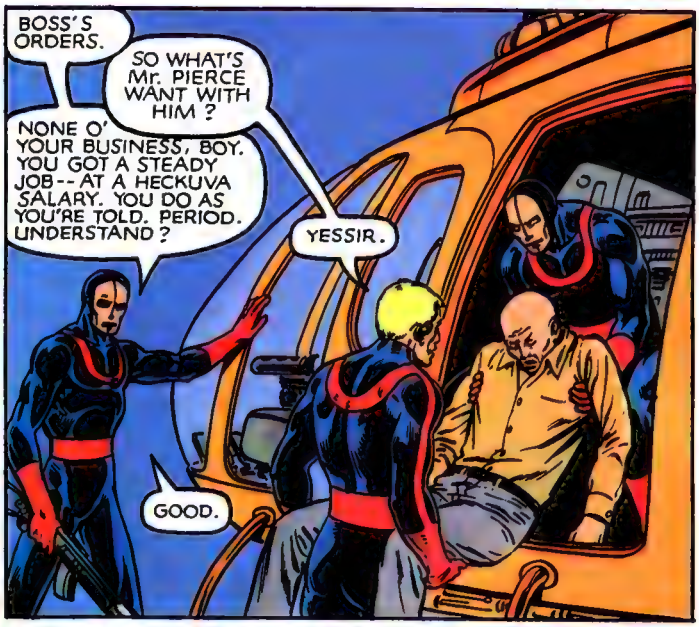
< WHO ARE YOU?! >
WHO ARE YOU?!?
DO YOU SPEAK ENGLISH? I KNOW NO PORTUGESE.
I AM SHAN, SHE IS DANI, WE ARE FRIENDS.
HELP ME CARRY ROBERTO, JULIANA. ONCE WE ARE OUTSIDE, WE SHOULD BE SAFE.
< SWINE! YOU'LL NOT LAY HANDS ON ME AGAIN! >
UNNNGNH!
< NO! ROBERTO, SHE ISN'T PART OF THE GANG-- SHE'S TRYING TO SAVE US! >
< Huh... ?!? >
< WHAT HAVE I DONE?! >
KRAK
AS XI'AN DROPS, STUNNED, HER CONCENTRATION BROKEN...
... HER HOST REGAINS HIS SENSES.
HOW'D I GET OVER HERE?! WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GUYS?!
WE'RE UNDER ATTACK! THOSE BLASTED KIDS ARE TRYING AN ESCAPE!
IT AIN'T GONNA WORK, BUNKIES!
< ROBERTO, GET DOWN! >
BUDDABUDDABUDDABUDDA
I'M HIT!
... LEAVING HIM CONFUSED, DISORIENTED. BY THE TIME HE REACTS, HE'LL BE DEAD.
THE BOY'S POWER HAS FADED ONCE MORE...
SO JULIANA ACTS FOR HIM.
< ROBERTO!! >
NO!
BUDDA BUDDA
FROM THE MAN'S MIND--KNOWING THAT SHE'S TOO LATE, BITTERNESS FUELING HER RAGE-- DANI FINDS THE THING HE FEARS MOST...
YEEARRGH!!
... AND HURLS IT AT HIM WITH ALL HER STRENGTH.


THAT SCREAM... I'VE NEVER HEARD ANYTHING LIKE IT.
NOR I.
SHAN, YOU'RE BLEEDING.
A BULLET GRAZED ME. IT IS NOTHING.
I... I HIT THEM TOO HARD.
WHEN I CREATE MY SPIRITFORMS, A TEMPORARY RAPPORT IS FORGED BETWEEN ME AND MY... PREY. I SENSE THEIR THOUGHTS, FEEL A FRACTION OF THE EMOTION I TAP.
THIS MAN WAS THE WORST. THERE WAS SUCH AGONY IN HIM, SO MUCH TWISTED HATE. I FORCED HIM TO CONFRONT THAT-- THROUGH THE SPIRITFORMS-- AND IT PROVED MORE THAN HE COULD BEAR.
Oh, SHAN ... IT WAS TERRIBLE!
HE DESERVED IT!
HE KILLED JULIANA!
NO... I LIE.
I KILLED HER.
MY ARROGANCE, MY STUPIDITY. I THOUGHT-- WITH MY POWER -- I COULD SAVE HER. THEN, NO ONE WOULD REMEMBER "ROBERTO THE MONSTER." I WOULD BE A HERO. EVERYTHING WOULD BE AS IT ONCE WAS.
YOU MUST NOT BLAME YOURSELF. IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT.
IF NOT MINE, THEN WHOSE?! THEY TOOK HER TO GET AT ME, SHE DIED SHIELDING ME FROM THEIR BULLETS, ALL BECAUSE I WAS BORN A MUTANT, A FREAK!
WE ARE... "FREAKS"... TOO.
ROBERTO, THERE IS A MAN--A TEACHER-- IN AMERICA--WHO CAN HELP YOU LEARN TO PROPERLY UTILIZE YOUR POWERS, SO THAT WHAT HAPPENED TONIGHT NEED NEVER RE-OCCUR.
I CARE NOTHING FOR TEACHERS. I WANT THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS, THE ONE WHO SENT THESE MEN TO DESTROY ME!
WHATEVER THE COST, HOWEVER LONG IT TAKES, I WILL FIND HIM--
--AND MAKE HIM PAY!
WE WANT HIM, TOO.
WHAT SAY WE JOIN FORCES?

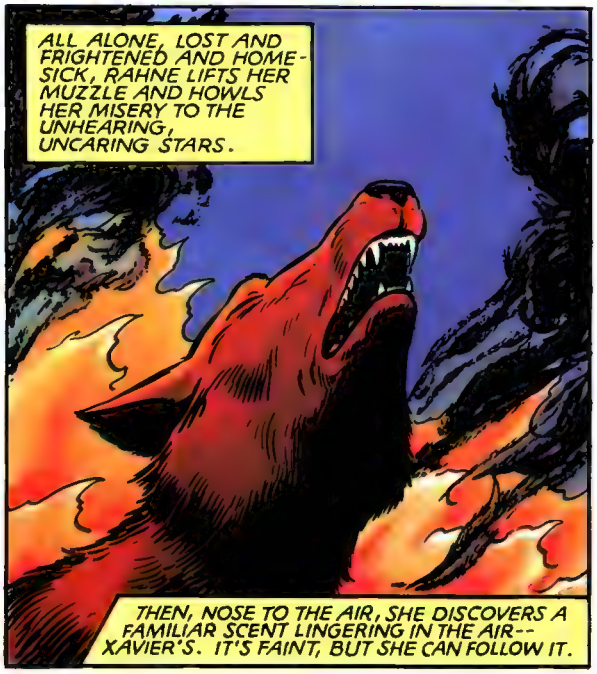
CTY. RTE 3 -- CAMERON, KENTUCKY...
FROM WHAT MOIRA DIDN'T SAY WHEN SHE TELEPHONED...
...I SUSPECT HER TREATMENT AT THE HANDS OF THE BRAZILIAN AUTHORITIES WAS NOT TERRIBLY PLEASANT. I'M GLAD SHE'S BEEN RELEASED AND THAT SHE'S UNHARMED.
SHHHH
EEEEWWW!
KRANG!
... AS FAR FROM BEING X-MEN AS THEY COULD POSSIBLY-- WHAT!?!
PERHAPS IF I'D ACTED MORE QUICKLY, OR GONE MYSELF, LITTLE JULIANA WOULD STILL BE ALIVE.
I KEEP FORGETTING THESE ARE CHILDREN...
WE'VE BEEN HIT-- BY A MISSILE?! NO, A HUMAN BEING-- A BOY!
RAHNE, GET AWAY!
WHOOM
OBEYING HIS MENTAL COMMAND, SHE STREAKS UP THE HILL, SHAKING HERSELF FREE OF HER CLOTHES, HER DARK COAT VIRTUALLY INVISIBLE IN THE SHADOWS.
BELATEDLY, SHE REMEMBERS XAVIER-- WITH HIS USELESS LEGS HE'D BE UNABLE TO FOLLOW HER...
... AND TURNS BACK TO PULL HIM FROM THE WRECKAGE.
SAM GUTHRIE BEATS HER TO IT.
DON'T YOU FRET, SIR. I'LL HAVE YOU OUTTA THIS MESS IN A JIFFY.
SHOOT-- HE'S UNCONSCIOUS!
HE'S AN INVITING TARGET AND FOR A MOMENT RAHNE CONSIDERS RIPPING OPEN HIS THROAT...
... ONLY SHE DOESN'T KNOW HOW.

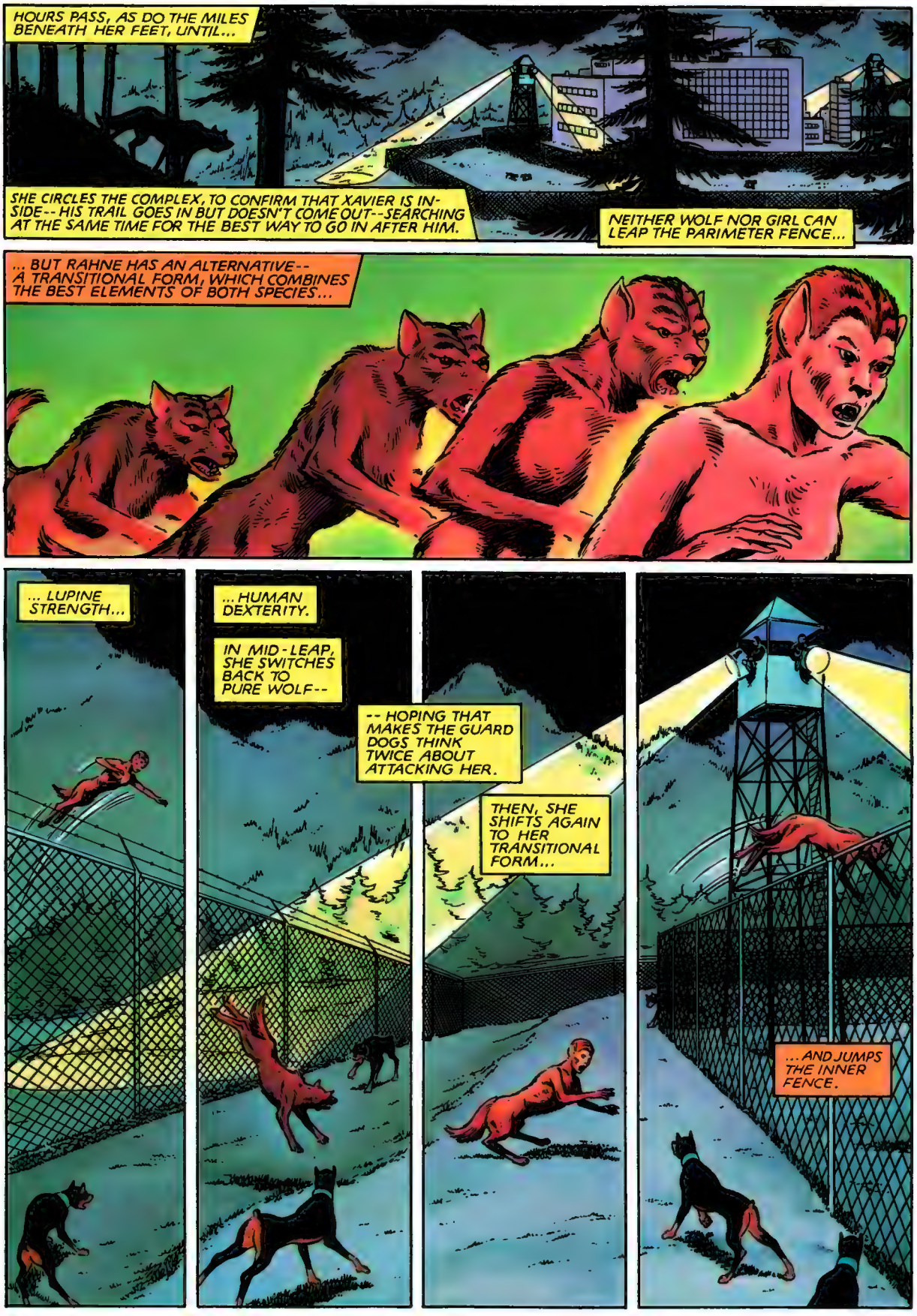

NICE WORK, CANNONBALL.
LOAD BALDY ABOARD THE CHOPPER. Mr. PIERCE IS REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO MEETING HIM.
I COULDA SWORE I SAW A PASSENGER IN THE JEEP--A GIRL--BUT THERE WAS NO ONE ELSE IN THE WRECK. SHE MIGHT'A BEEN THROWN CLEAR. I'D SURE LIKE TO LOOK FOR HER.

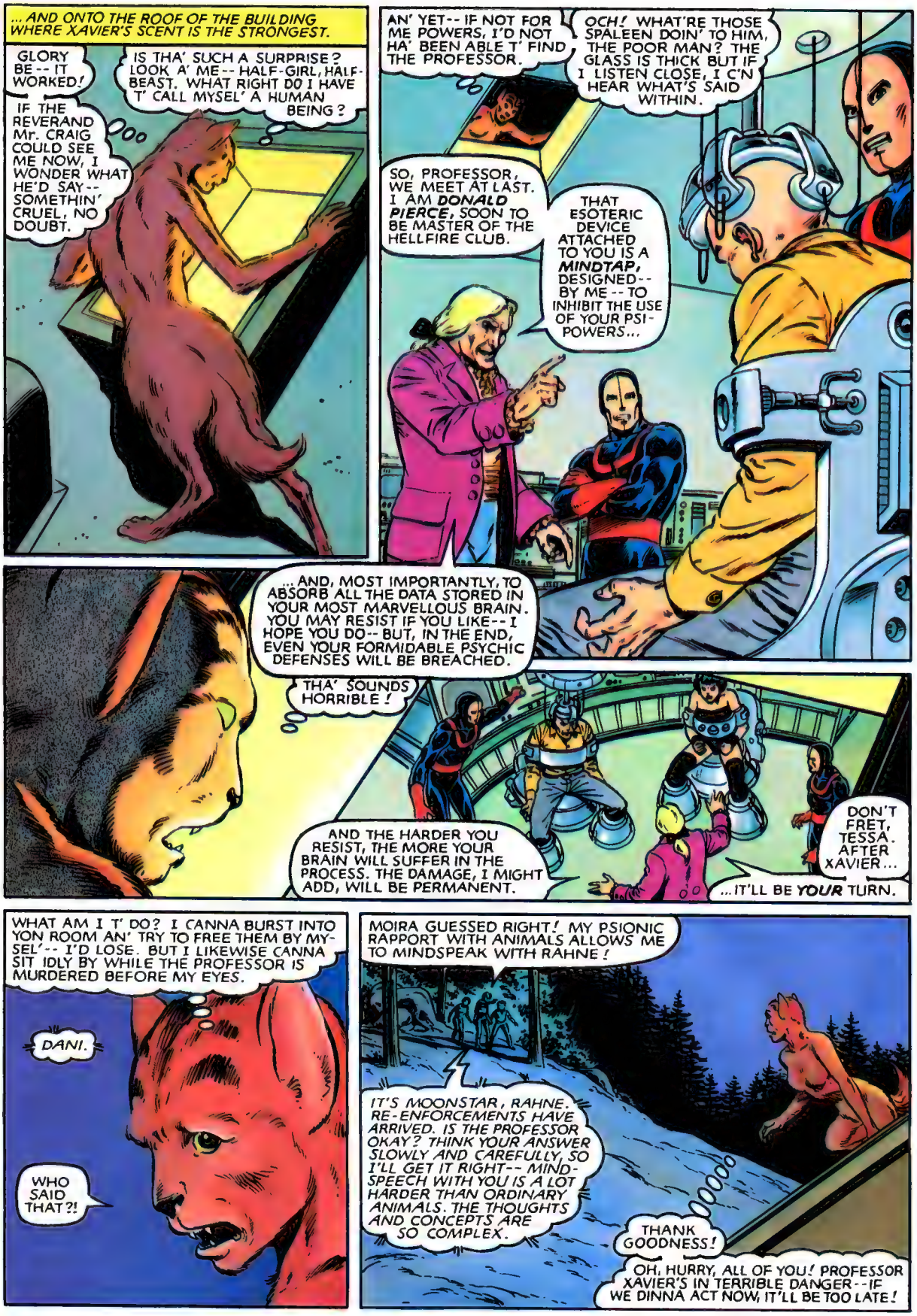
NOT A CHANCE.
THIS IS ROUGH COUNTRY. SHE COULD'A BEEN HURT. SHE MAY DIE!
IF SHE EXISTED. THE ONLY HUMAN LIFEFORMS REGISTERING ON THE HELICOPTER'S SCANNERS ARE US AND THE GOOD PROFESSOR THERE.
WHO IS HE, CHASE? WHY'D YOU SEND ME TO ATTACK HIM?

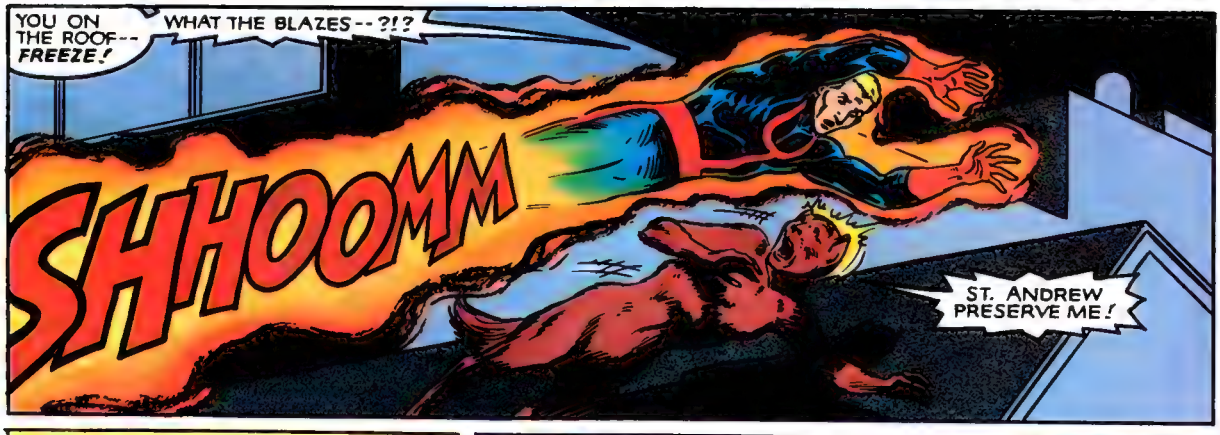

BOSS'S ORDERS.
SO WHAT'S Mr. PIERCE WANT WITH HIM?
NONE O' YOUR BUSINESS, BOY. YOU GOT A STEADY JOB--AT A HECKUVA SALARY. YOU DO AS YOU'RE TOLD. PERIOD. UNDERSTAND?
YESSIR.
GOOD.

IN A MATTER OF MINUTES, THE 'COPTER IS AIRBORNE, HEADING WEST ACROSS THE FOREST.

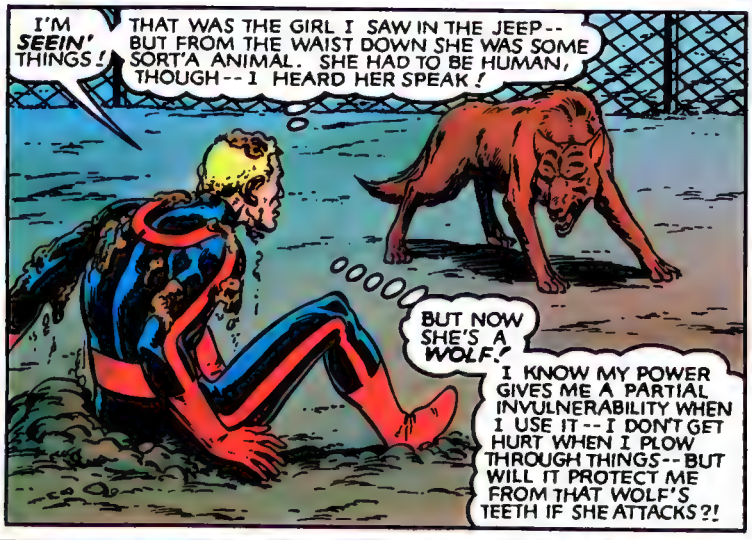

ALL ALONE, LOST AND FRIGHTENED AND HOMESICK, RAHNE LIFTS HER MUZZLE AND HOWLS HER MISERY TO THE UNHEARING, UNCARING STARS.
THEN, NOSE TO THE AIR, SHE DISCOVERS A FAMILIAR SCENT LINGERING IN THE AIR--XAVIER'S. IT'S FAINT, BUT SHE CAN FOLLOW IT.

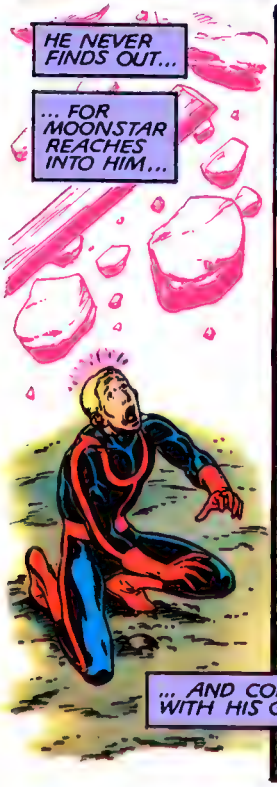

HOURS PASS, AS DO THE MILES BENEATH HER FEET, UNTIL...
SHE CIRCLES THE COMPLEX, TO CONFIRM THAT XAVIER IS INSIDE-- HIS TRAIL GOES IN BUT DOESN'T COME OUT--SEARCHING AT THE SAME TIME FOR THE BEST WAY TO GO IN AFTER HIM.
NEITHER WOLF NOR GIRL CAN LEAP THE PARIMETER FENCE...
... BUT RAHNE HAS AN ALTERNATIVE-- A TRANSITIONAL FORM, WHICH COMBINES THE BEST ELEMENTS OF BOTH SPECIES...
... LUPINE STRENGTH...
... HUMAN DEXTERITY.
IN MID-LEAP, SHE SWITCHES BACK TO PURE WOLF--
-- HOPING THAT MAKES THE GUARD DOGS THINK TWICE ABOUT ATTACKING HER.
THEN, SHE SHIFTS AGAIN TO HER TRANSITIONAL FORM...
... AND JUMPS THE INNER FENCE.

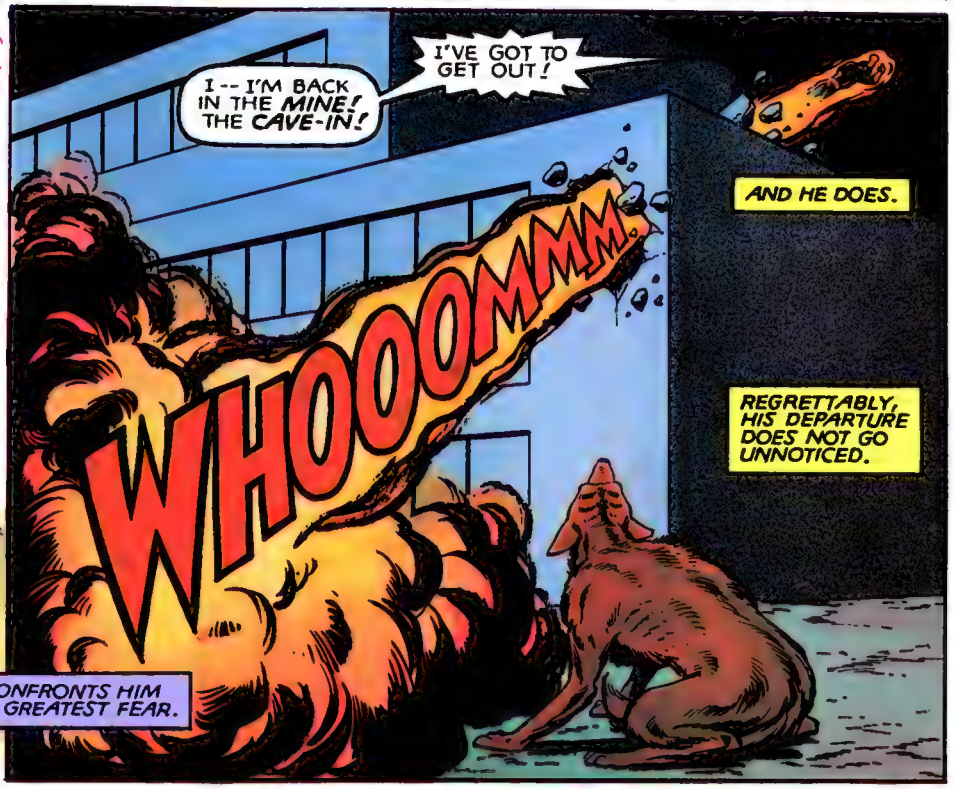

...AND ONTO THE ROOF OF THE BUILDING WHERE XAVIER'S SCENT IS THE STRONGEST.
GLORY BE -- IT WORKED!
IS THA' SUCH A SURPRISE? LOOK A' ME -- HALF-GIRL, HALF-BEAST. WHAT RIGHT DO I HAVE T' CALL MYSEL' A HUMAN BEING?
IF THE REVERAND Mr. CRAIG COULD SEE ME NOW, I WONDER WHAT HE'D SAY -- SOMETHIN' CRUEL, NO DOUBT.
AN' YET -- IF NOT FOR ME POWERS, I'D NOT HA' BEEN ABLE T' FIND THE PROFESSOR.
OCH! WHAT'RE THOSE SPALEEN DOIN' TO HIM, THE POOR MAN? THE GLASS IS THICK BUT IF I LISTEN CLOSE, I C'N HEAR WHAT'S SAID WITHIN.
SO, PROFESSOR, WE MEET AT LAST. I AM DONALD PIERCE, SOON TO BE MASTER OF THE HELLFIRE CLUB.
THAT ESOTERIC DEVICE ATTACHED TO YOU IS A MINDTAP, DESIGNED -- BY ME -- TO INHIBIT THE USE OF YOUR PSI-POWERS...
...AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, TO ABSORB ALL THE DATA STORED IN YOUR MOST MARVELLOUS BRAIN. YOU MAY RESIST IF YOU LIKE -- I HOPE YOU DO -- BUT, IN THE END, EVEN YOUR FORMIDABLE PSYCHIC DEFENSES WILL BE BREACHED.
THA' SOUNDS HORRIBLE!
AND THE HARDER YOU RESIST, THE MORE YOUR BRAIN WILL SUFFER IN THE PROCESS. THE DAMAGE, I MIGHT ADD, WILL BE PERMANENT.
DON'T FRET, TESSA. AFTER XAVIER...
...IT'LL BE YOUR TURN.
WHAT AM I T' DO? I CANNA BURST INTO YON ROOM AN' TRY TO FREE THEM BY MYSEL' -- I'D LOSE. BUT I LIKEWISE CANNA SIT IDLY BY WHILE THE PROFESSOR IS MURDERED BEFORE MY EYES.
DANI.
WHO SAID THAT?!
MOIRA GUESSED RIGHT! MY PSIONIC RAPPORT WITH ANIMALS ALLOWS ME TO MINDSPEAK WITH RAHNE!
IT'S MOONSTAR, RAHNE. RE-ENFORCEMENTS HAVE ARRIVED. IS THE PROFESSOR OKAY? THINK YOUR ANSWER SLOWLY AND CAREFULLY, SO I'LL GET IT RIGHT -- MIND-SPEECH WITH YOU IS A LOT HARDER THAN ORDINARY ANIMALS. THE THOUGHTS AND CONCEPTS ARE SO COMPLEX.
THANK GOODNESS!
OH, HURRY, ALL OF YOU! PROFESSOR XAVIER'S IN TERRIBLE DANGER -- IF WE DINNA ACT NOW, IT'LL BE TOO LATE!


YOU ON THE ROOF-- FREEZE!
WHAT THE BLAZES--?!?
SHHOOMM
ST. ANDREW PRESERVE ME!

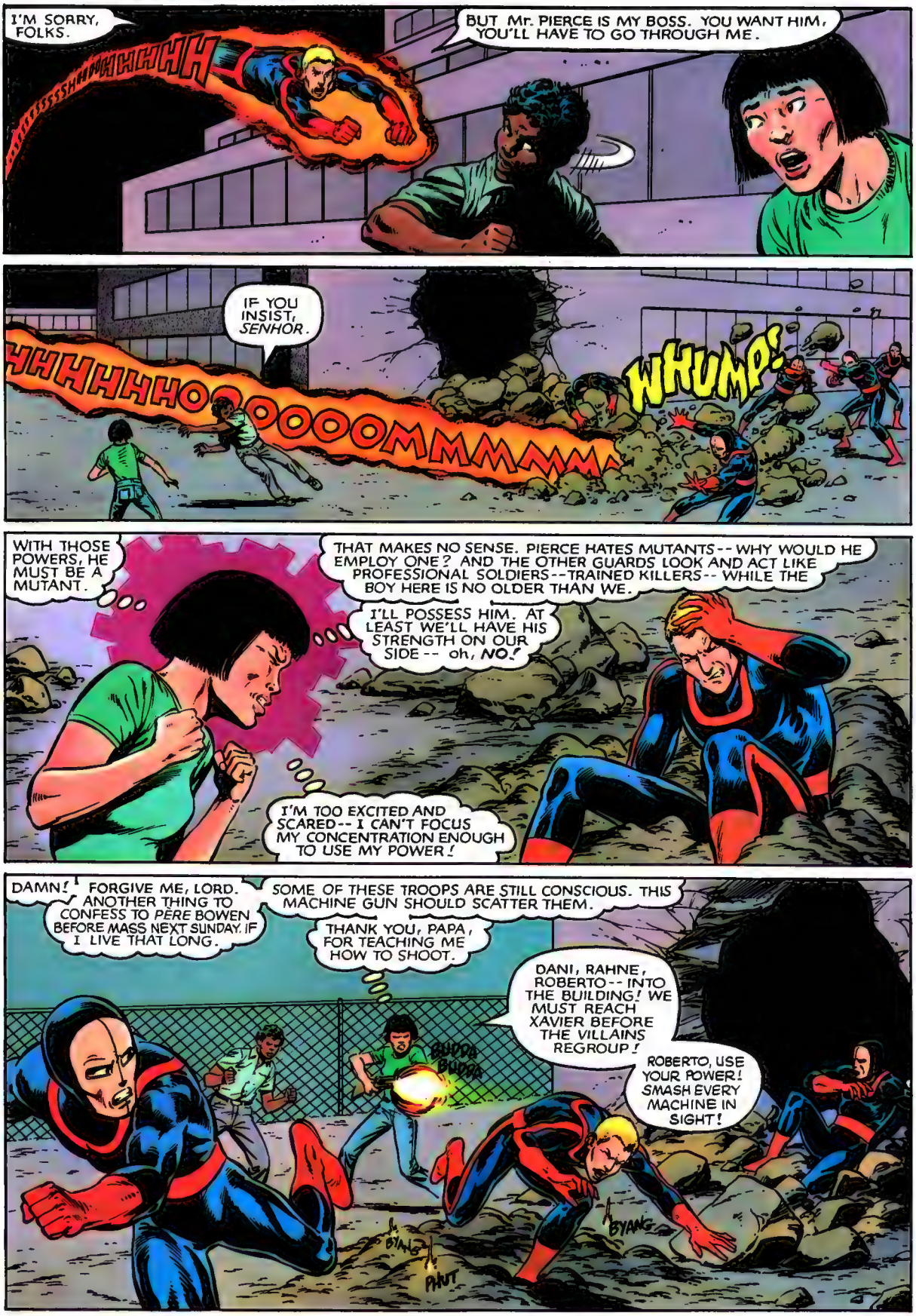
SURPRISE SENDS BOTH YOUNG PEOPLE TUMBLING OFF THE ROOF. RAHNE LANDS ON ALL FOURS.
WHUMP!
SO DOES SAM GUTHRIE.

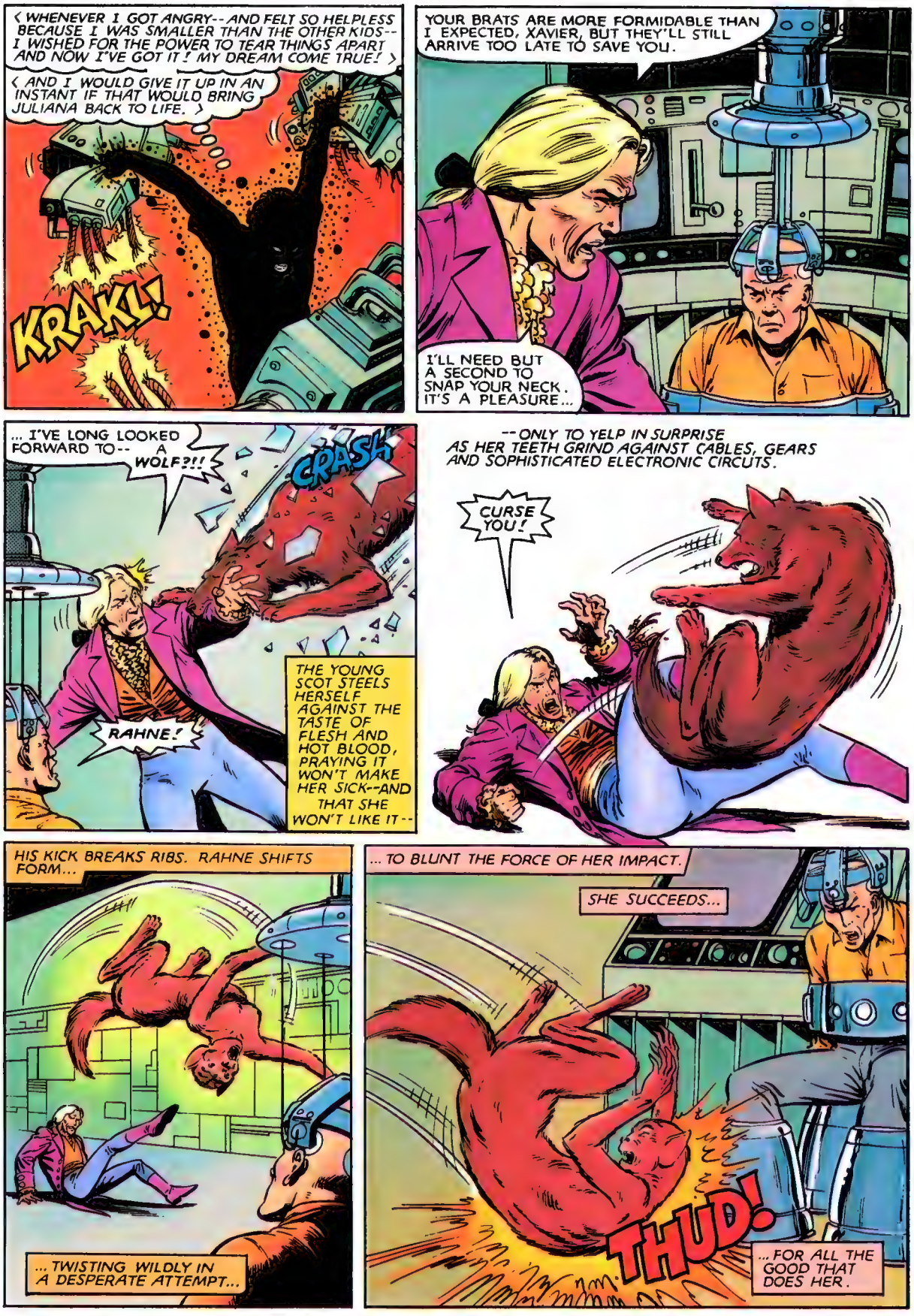

I'M SEEIN' THINGS!
THAT WAS THE GIRL I SAW IN THE JEEP-- BUT FROM THE WAIST DOWN SHE WAS SOME SORT'A ANIMAL. SHE HAD TO BE HUMAN, THOUGH-- I HEARD HER SPEAK!
BUT NOW SHE'S A WOLF!
I KNOW MY POWER GIVES ME A PARTIAL INVULNERABILITY WHEN I USE IT-- I DON'T GET HURT WHEN I PLOW THROUGH THINGS-- BUT WILL IT PROTECT ME FROM THAT WOLF'S TEETH IF SHE ATTACKS?!


HE NEVER FINDS OUT...
... FOR MOONSTAR REACHES INTO HIM...
... AND CONFRONTS HIM WITH HIS GREATEST FEAR.

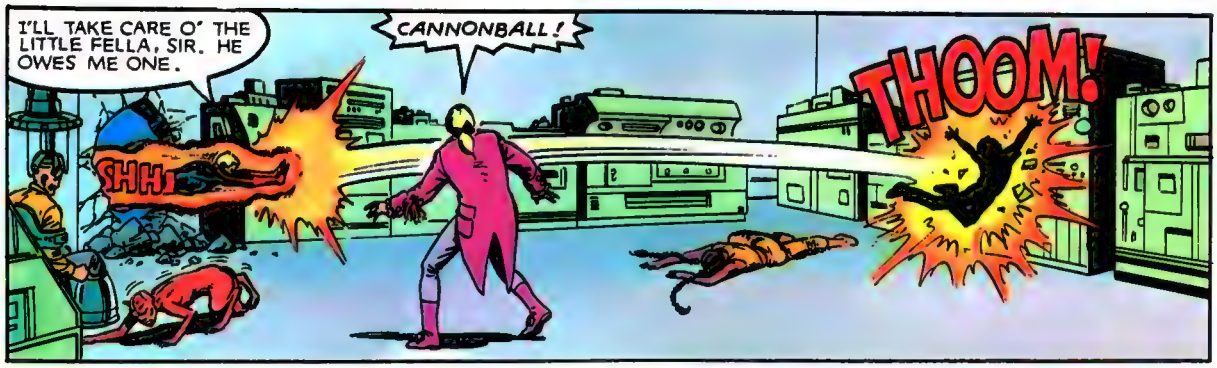

I -- I'M BACK IN THE MINE! THE CAVE-IN!
I'VE GOT TO GET OUT!
WHOOOMMM
AND HE DOES.
REGRETTABLY, HIS DEPARTURE DOES NOT GO UNNOTICED.

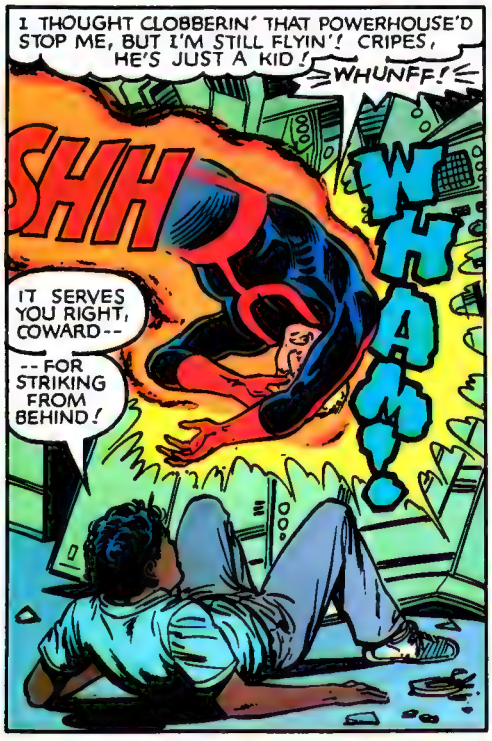
BUT WHEN THE GUARDS RESPOND TO THE ALARM, THEY FIND RAHNE WAITING FOR THEM...
... HER MOVES CUED AND DIRECTED TELEPATHICALLY BY MOONSTAR.
GET THIS CUR OFFA ME-- BEFORE IT TEARS THROUGH MY BATTLE ARMOR!
THE SHE-WOLF IS THE LEAST OF YOUR PROBLEMS, BUTCHERS!
SKRAM!
Huh--?!?
YOW!
NOT TOO SHABBY, MY FRIEND. YOU MUST HAVE HIT SOMETHING IMPORTANT.
BOOM!
THEIR UNIFORMS PROTECTED THEM. THEY ARE ONLY STUNNED. THEY SHOULD BE DEAD.
WE ARE NOT KILLERS, ROBERTO.
SPEAK FOR YOURSELF, SHAN.
I'LL PLAY BY YOUR RULES UNTIL I FIND PIERCE. AFTER THAT, I MAKE NO GUARANTEES.
RAHNE, LEAD US TO XAVIER!

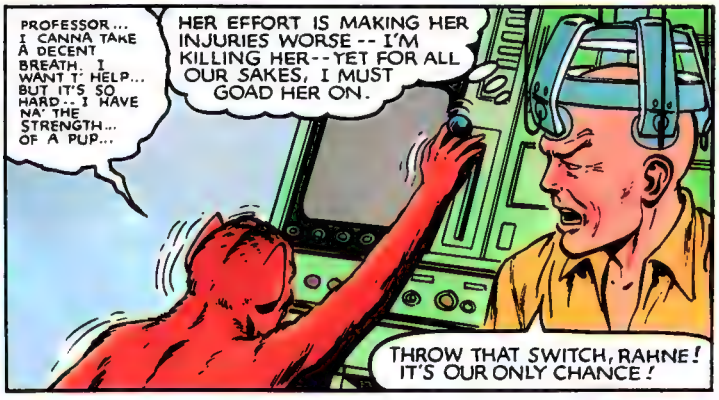

I'M SORRY, FOLKS.
SSSSSSSSHHHHHHHHH
BUT Mr. PIERCE IS MY BOSS. YOU WANT HIM, YOU'LL HAVE TO GO THROUGH ME.
IF YOU INSIST, SENHOR.
YHHHHHHOOOOOOOMMMMMM
WHUMP!
WITH THOSE POWERS, HE MUST BE A MUTANT.
THAT MAKES NO SENSE. PIERCE HATES MUTANTS -- WHY WOULD HE EMPLOY ONE? AND THE OTHER GUARDS LOOK AND ACT LIKE PROFESSIONAL SOLDIERS -- TRAINED KILLERS -- WHILE THE BOY HERE IS NO OLDER THAN WE.
I'LL POSSESS HIM. AT LEAST WE'LL HAVE HIS STRENGTH ON OUR SIDE -- oh, NO!
I'M TOO EXCITED AND SCARED -- I CAN'T FOCUS MY CONCENTRATION ENOUGH TO USE MY POWER!
DAMN! FORGIVE ME, LORD. ANOTHER THING TO CONFESS TO PÈRE BOWEN BEFORE MASS NEXT SUNDAY, IF I LIVE THAT LONG.
SOME OF THESE TROOPS ARE STILL CONSCIOUS. THIS MACHINE GUN SHOULD SCATTER THEM.
THANK YOU, PAPA, FOR TEACHING ME HOW TO SHOOT.
DANI, RAHNE, ROBERTO -- INTO THE BUILDING! WE MUST REACH XAVIER BEFORE THE VILLAINS REGROUP!
ROBERTO, USE YOUR POWER! SMASH EVERY MACHINE IN SIGHT!
BUDDA BUDDA
BYANG
BYANG
PANT

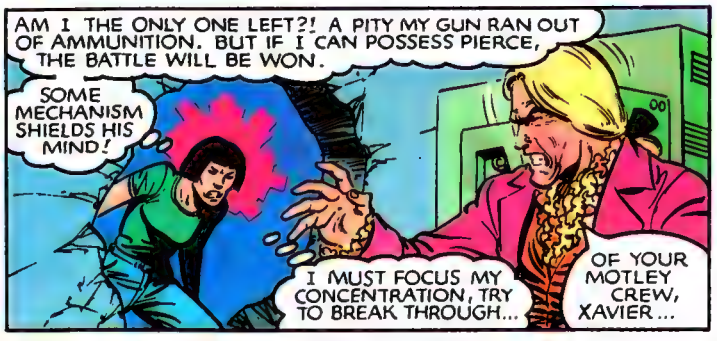

〈 WHENEVER I GOT ANGRY--AND FELT SO HELPLESS BECAUSE I WAS SMALLER THAN THE OTHER KIDS--I WISHED FOR THE POWER TO TEAR THINGS APART AND NOW I'VE GOT IT! MY DREAM COME TRUE! 〉
〈 AND I WOULD GIVE IT UP IN AN INSTANT IF THAT WOULD BRING JULIANA BACK TO LIFE. 〉
KRAKL!
YOUR BRATS ARE MORE FORMIDABLE THAN I EXPECTED, XAVIER, BUT THEY'LL STILL ARRIVE TOO LATE TO SAVE YOU.
I'LL NEED BUT A SECOND TO SNAP YOUR NECK. IT'S A PLEASURE...
... I'VE LONG LOOKED FORWARD TO-- A WOLF?!!
CRASH
RAHNE!
THE YOUNG SCOT STEELS HERSELF AGAINST THE TASTE OF FLESH AND HOT BLOOD, PRAYING IT WON'T MAKE HER SICK--AND THAT SHE WON'T LIKE IT--
--ONLY TO YELP IN SURPRISE AS HER TEETH GRIND AGAINST CABLES, GEARS AND SOPHISTICATED ELECTRONIC CIRCUITS.
CURSE YOU!
HIS KICK BREAKS RIBS. RAHNE SHIFTS FORM...
... TWISTING WILDLY IN A DESPERATE ATTEMPT...
... TO BLUNT THE FORCE OF HER IMPACT.
SHE SUCCEEDS...
THUD!
... FOR ALL THE GOOD THAT DOES HER.

FOR RAHNE, FOR MY GRANDFATHER -- FOR ALL YOUR VICTIMS, BUTCHER -- MAY MY SPIRITFORMS BRING YOU UNENDING TORMENT!
Wuh... !?!
AN ADMIRABLE ATTEMPT, MY DEAR --
AHHRRR!!
-- BUT DOOMED FROM THE START.
WHUMP!
LIKE MY MEN, I TOO AM BIONIC. AND AMONG MY MYRIAD SYSTEMS ARE DEFENSES AGAINST ALL FORMS OF PSIONIC ASSAULT.
HA HA HA
I SIMPLY REFLECTED YOUR POWER BACK AT YOU. I HOPE IT HURT.
PRO... FESSOR...
RAHNE!
I... HURT...
THERE'S BLOOD ON HER FACE -- SHE MUST HAVE A PUNCTURED LUNG. IT'S A MIRACLE SHE'S STILL ALIVE, MUCH LESS CONSCIOUS.
FORGIVE ME, CHILD, FOR WHAT I MUST NOW DEMAND OF YOU.
RAHNE, LISTEN CAREFULLY. DO PRECISELY WHAT I SAY.
MURDERER!
FACE ROBERTO daCOSTA, IF YOU DARE!
KROM
SPLENDID, LAD. KEEP PIERCE OCCUPIED -- AS FAR FROM US AS POSSIBLE.
RAHNE, MOVE TO THE CONSOLE BEHIND ME.
I'LL... TRY... BUT I FEEL SO WEAK...

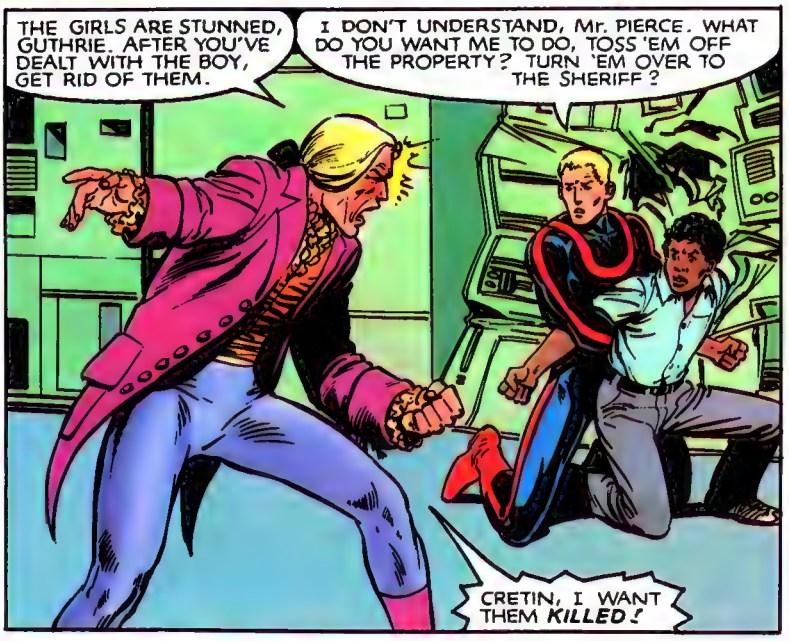

I'LL TAKE CARE O' THE LITTLE FELLA, SIR. HE OWES ME ONE.
CANNONBALL!
SHH
THOOM!

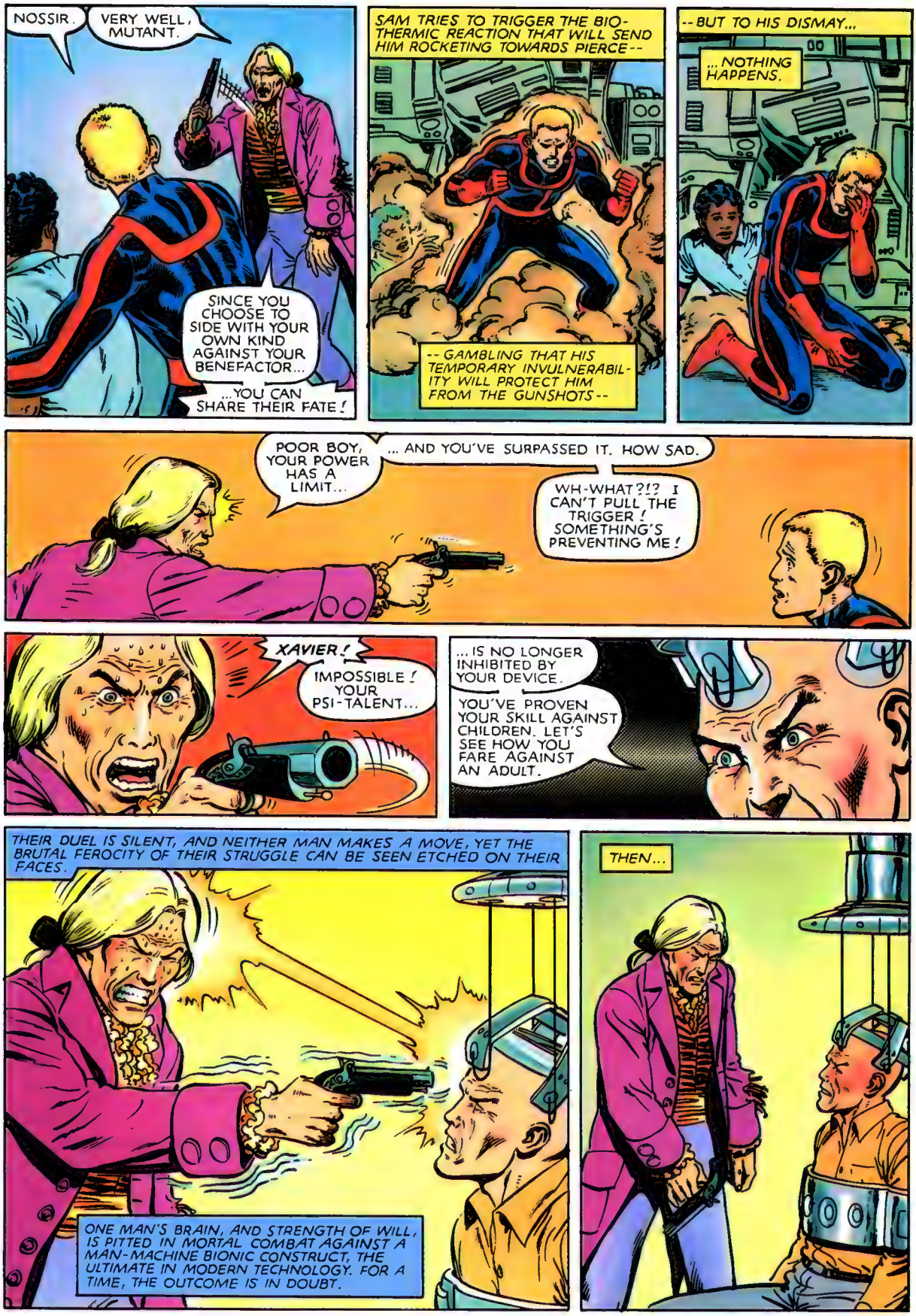

I THOUGHT CLOBBERIN' THAT POWERHOUSE'D STOP ME, BUT I'M STILL FLYIN'! CRIPES, HE'S JUST A KID!
WHUNFF!
SHH
WHAM!
IT SERVES YOU RIGHT, COWARD--
--FOR STRIKING FROM BEHIND!

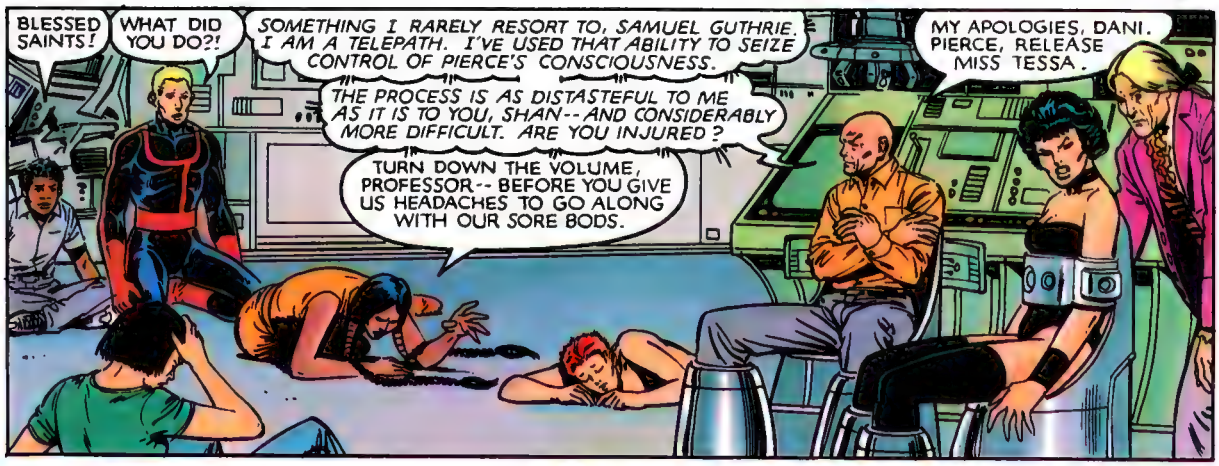

PROFESSOR... I CANNA TAKE A DECENT BREATH. I WANT T' HELP... BUT IT'S SO HARD... I HAVE NA' THE STRENGTH... OF A PUP...
HER EFFORT IS MAKING HER INJURIES WORSE -- I'M KILLING HER--YET FOR ALL OUR SAKES, I MUST GOAD HER ON.
THROW THAT SWITCH, RAHNE! IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE!


AM I THE ONLY ONE LEFT?! A PITY MY GUN RAN OUT OF AMMUNITION. BUT IF I CAN POSSESS PIERCE, THE BATTLE WILL BE WON.
SOME MECHANISM SHIELDS HIS MIND!
I MUST FOCUS MY CONCENTRATION, TRY TO BREAK THROUGH...
OF YOUR MOTLEY CREW, XAVIER...

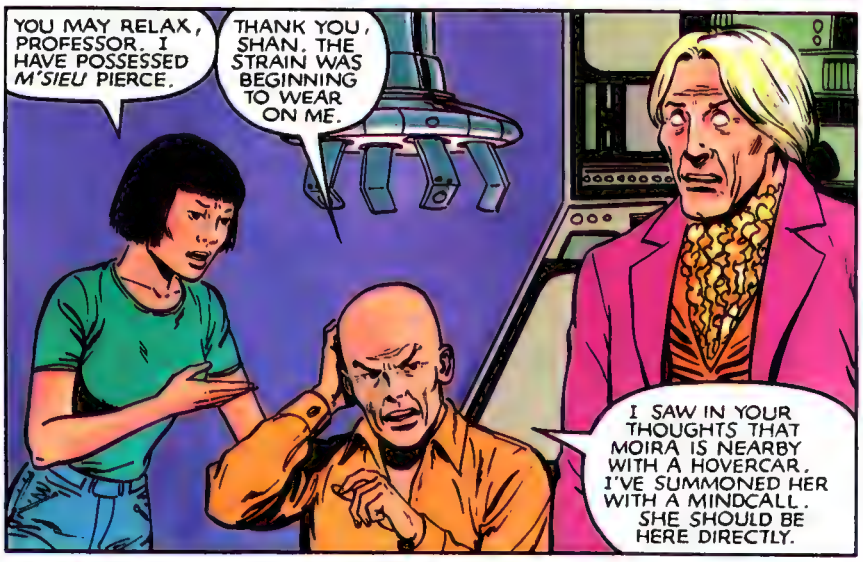
...THIS WAS THE MOST DANGEROUS. REGRETTABLY, SHE HAS BUT A SINGLE WEAPON--HER MUTANT POWER.
I HAVE MANY.
ZAP!


THE GIRLS ARE STUNNED, GUTHRIE. AFTER YOU'VE DEALT WITH THE BOY, GET RID OF THEM.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND, Mr. PIERCE. WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO, TOSS 'EM OFF THE PROPERTY? TURN 'EM OVER TO THE SHERIFF?
CRETIN, I WANT THEM KILLED!


NOSSIR.
VERY WELL, MUTANT.
SINCE YOU CHOOSE TO SIDE WITH YOUR OWN KIND AGAINST YOUR BENEFACTOR...
...YOU CAN SHARE THEIR FATE!
SAM TRIES TO TRIGGER THE BIO-THERMIC REACTION THAT WILL SEND HIM ROCKETING TOWARDS PIERCE--
--GAMBLING THAT HIS TEMPORARY INVULNERABILITY WILL PROTECT HIM FROM THE GUNSHOTS--
--BUT TO HIS DISMAY...
...NOTHING HAPPENS.
POOR BOY, YOUR POWER HAS A LIMIT...
... AND YOU'VE SURPASSED IT. HOW SAD.
WH-WHAT?!? I CAN'T PULL THE TRIGGER! SOMETHING'S PREVENTING ME!
XAVIER!
IMPOSSIBLE! YOUR PSI-TALENT...
...IS NO LONGER INHIBITED BY YOUR DEVICE.
YOU'VE PROVEN YOUR SKILL AGAINST CHILDREN. LET'S SEE HOW YOU FARE AGAINST AN ADULT.
THEIR DUEL IS SILENT, AND NEITHER MAN MAKES A MOVE, YET THE BRUTAL FEROCITY OF THEIR STRUGGLE CAN BE SEEN ETCHED ON THEIR FACES.
ONE MAN'S BRAIN, AND STRENGTH OF WILL, IS PITTED IN MORTAL COMBAT AGAINST A MAN-MACHINE BIONIC CONSTRUCT, THE ULTIMATE IN MODERN TECHNOLOGY. FOR A TIME, THE OUTCOME IS IN DOUBT.
THEN...


BLESSED SAINTS!
WHAT DID YOU DO?!
SOMETHING I RARELY RESORT TO, SAMUEL GUTHRIE. I AM A TELEPATH. I'VE USED THAT ABILITY TO SEIZE CONTROL OF PIERCE'S CONSCIOUSNESS.
THE PROCESS IS AS DISTASTEFUL TO ME AS IT IS TO YOU, SHAN-- AND CONSIDERABLY MORE DIFFICULT. ARE YOU INJURED?
TURN DOWN THE VOLUME, PROFESSOR-- BEFORE YOU GIVE US HEADACHES TO GO ALONG WITH OUR SORE BODS.
MY APOLOGIES, DANI. PIERCE, RELEASE MISS TESSA.

RAHNE!
SHE'S BARELY BREATHING-- AND HER PULSE IS SO FAINT, I HARDLY FELT IT. WE'VE GOT TO GET HER TO A HOSPITAL!

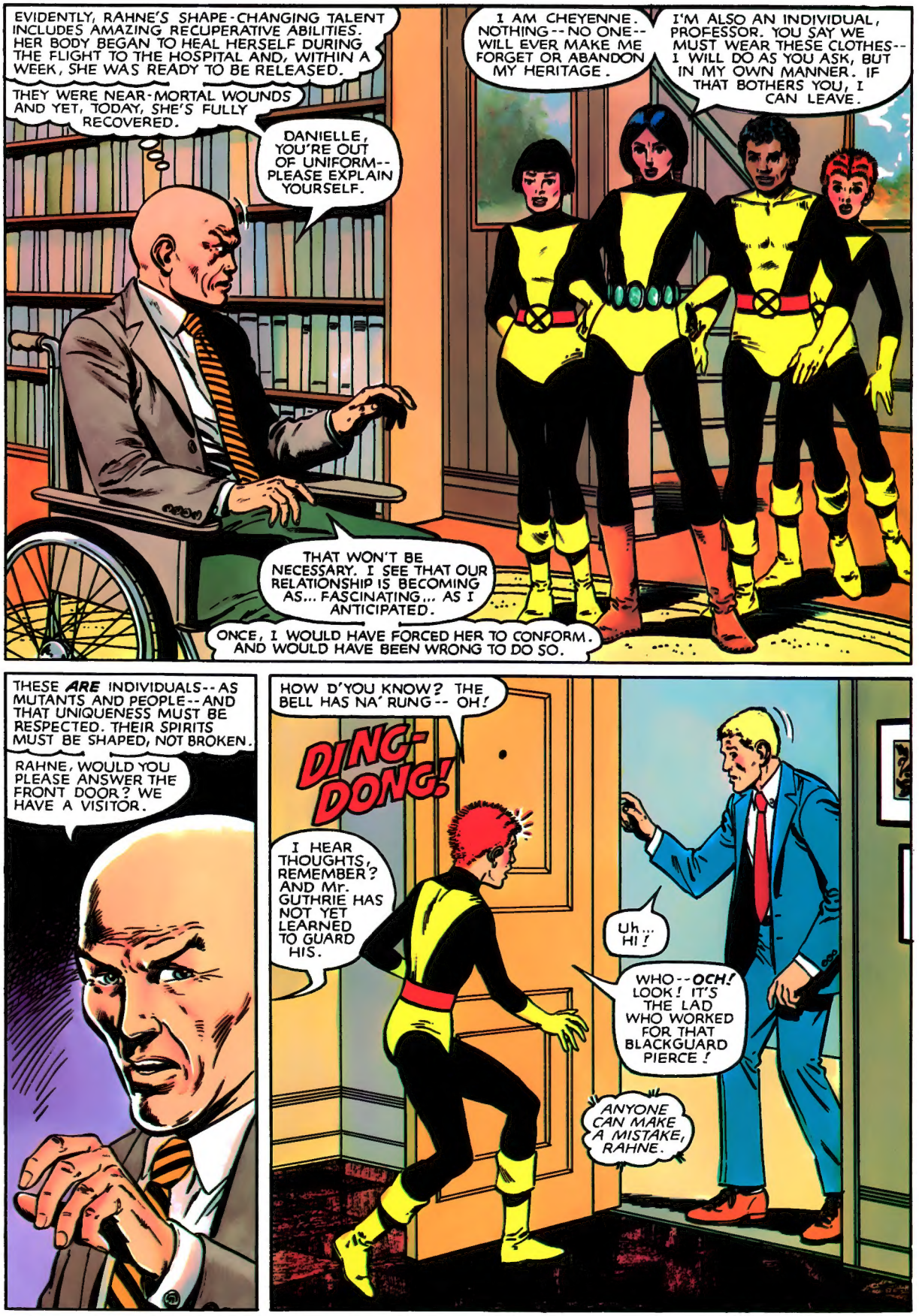

YOU MAY RELAX, PROFESSOR. I HAVE POSSESSED M'SIEU PIERCE.
THANK YOU, SHAN. THE STRAIN WAS BEGINNING TO WEAR ON ME.
I SAW IN YOUR THOUGHTS THAT MOIRA IS NEARBY WITH A HOVERCAR. I'VE SUMMONED HER WITH A MINDCALL. SHE SHOULD BE HERE DIRECTLY.

RAHNE COULD BE DEAD BY THEN.
NO, DANIELLE. I AM PSIONICALLY MONITORING HER CONDITION. HER INJURIES ARE SERIOUS BUT IF THERE ARE NO UNDUE DELAYS, IF LUCK IS WITH US, SHE SHOULD RECOVER.

THE QUESTION IS, WHAT ABOUT PIERCE? WE DARE NOT TAKE HIM WITH US. IF SHAN RELAXES HER CONCENTRATION AND HE BREAKS FREE, HE COULD SLAY US ALL BEFORE WE KNEW WHAT WAS HAPPENING. YET WE DARE NOT LEAVE HIM BEHIND, OR WAIT FOR THE AUTHORITIES TO ARRIVE...
I HAVE A SOLUTION, CHARLES.
LEAVE HIM TO ME.

THE HELLFIRE CLUB TAKES CARE OF ITS OWN. PIERCE HAS PROVEN HIMSELF AS GREAT A THREAT TO US AS TO YOU.
I THINK YOU CAN SAFELY ASSUME YOU'VE HEARD THE LAST OF HIM.
HE DOESN'T TRUST TESSA -- OR HER MASTERS IN THE HELLFIRE CLUB, WHO'VE PROVEN THEMSELVES AMONG THE X-MEN'S DEADLIEST FOES -- AND HE'D RATHER TURN PIERCE OVER TO THE AUTHORITIES. BUT RAHNE'S LIFE HANGS IN THE BALANCE.
HIS PRIMARY DUTY IS TO HER.
PARDON ME, SIR, BUT WHAT SHOULD I DO?
YOUR BOSS WENT THATAWAY, WITH THE LADY.
WHY DON'T YOU GO WITH HIM.

EPILOGUE--
--XAVIER'S MANSION, A FORTNIGHT LATER.
IT IS TIME.
ATTENTION, STUDENTS! THIS IS PROFESSOR XAVIER CALLING.
REPORT TO ME AT ONCE. CLASS IS NOW IN SESSION.
THIS IS NOT WHAT I HAD IN MIND WHEN I FIRST CAME TO THE PROFESSOR. BUT NOW, THANKS TO HIM, LEONG AND NGA WILL BE PROVIDED FOR, WHATEVER HAPPENS TO ME.
AND IF, THROUGH HIS TEACHING, MY POWERS CAN BE OF BENEFIT TO HUMANITY, THEN THINGS WILL INDEED TURN OUT FOR THE BEST.
NOT THE MOST STYLISH OF UNIFORMS--BUT... NOT BAD. I WISH JULIANA COULD SEE ME IN IT. PERHAPS SHE CAN, FROM HEAVEN.
WHEN PIERCE WAS BEATEN...
...I COULD HAVE KILLED HIM--BUT I REALIZED THAT WOULD HAVE MADE ME JUST LIKE HIM. AND THAT I WILL NEVER BE!
I CHOSE TO HELP SAVE RAHNE RATHER THAN AVENGE YOU, GRANDFATHER.
I CHOSE LIFE OVER DEATH, AS YOU TAUGHT ME.
I DO NOT KNOW IF I WILL BE HAPPY HERE--I ALREADY MISS MY MOUNTAINS--BUT FOR YOUR SAKE, IN YOUR MEMORY, I WILL TRY.
WHAT WONDROUS CLOTHES--THOUGH A BIT DARING--I'D NA' BE ALLOWED SUCH FINERY BY REVEREND CRAIG.
AN' THEY MAGICALLY DISAPPEAR WHEN I BECOME A WOLF...
...ONLY TO REAPPEAR WHEN I TRANSFORM BACK INTO MYSEL'.


EVIDENTLY, RAHNE'S SHAPE-CHANGING TALENT INCLUDES AMAZING RECUPERATIVE ABILITIES. HER BODY BEGAN TO HEAL HERSELF DURING THE FLIGHT TO THE HOSPITAL AND, WITHIN A WEEK, SHE WAS READY TO BE RELEASED.
THEY WERE NEAR-MORTAL WOUNDS AND YET, TODAY, SHE'S FULLY RECOVERED.
DANIELLE, YOU'RE OUT OF UNIFORM-- PLEASE EXPLAIN YOURSELF.
I AM CHEYENNE. NOTHING -- NO ONE -- WILL EVER MAKE ME FORGET OR ABANDON MY HERITAGE.
I'M ALSO AN INDIVIDUAL, PROFESSOR. YOU SAY WE MUST WEAR THESE CLOTHES-- I WILL DO AS YOU ASK, BUT IN MY OWN MANNER. IF THAT BOTHERS YOU, I CAN LEAVE.
THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY. I SEE THAT OUR RELATIONSHIP IS BECOMING AS... FASCINATING... AS I ANTICIPATED.
ONCE, I WOULD HAVE FORCED HER TO CONFORM. AND WOULD HAVE BEEN WRONG TO DO SO.
THESE ARE INDIVIDUALS -- AS MUTANTS AND PEOPLE -- AND THAT UNIQUENESS MUST BE RESPECTED. THEIR SPIRITS MUST BE SHAPED, NOT BROKEN.
RAHNE, WOULD YOU PLEASE ANSWER THE FRONT DOOR? WE HAVE A VISITOR.
HOW D'YOU KNOW? THE BELL HAS NA' RUNG -- OH!
DING-DONG!
I HEAR THOUGHTS, REMEMBER? AND Mr. GUTHRIE HAS NOT YET LEARNED TO GUARD HIS.
Uh... HI!
WHO -- OCH! LOOK! IT'S THE LAD WHO WORKED FOR THAT BLACKGUARD PIERCE!
ANYONE CAN MAKE A MISTAKE, RAHNE.

SAM GUTHRIE IS HERE AT MY INVITATION. HE IS NOT A VILLAIN. PIERCE DUPED HIM INTO BELIEVING WE WERE THE ENEMY.
HOW CAN YOU BE CERTAIN?
INSTINCT, ROBERTO. TRUST. SAM GAVE HIS WORD.
HAH!
WHAT DOES ONE WHO STRIKES FROM BEHIND KNOW OF HONOR?
NOT MUCH, I GUESS, BUT I'M WILLIN' TO LEARN.
I'D LIKE TO MAKE AMENDS, IF I CAN.
'BERTO, I NEAR PERISHED IN THA' SCRAP...
... AN' I SAY HE DESERVES A SECOND CHANCE.
I COULD NEVER REFUSE A BEAUTIFUL GIRL ANYTHING.
WELCOME, SENHOR.
LISTEN TO HIS MAJESTY, WILLYA-- "WELCOME, SENHOR"-- YOU'RE SOME HOMBRE, ARN'T'CHA, 'BERTO? WHO D'YOU THINK RUNS THIS OUTFIT, ANYWAY?
PROFESSOR XAVIER--
-- FOR THE PRESENT.
THEIR LAUGHTER IS INFECTIOUS AND, TRY AS HE MIGHT, XAVIER CANNOT RESTRAIN A SMILE.
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN WEEKS, HE FEELS THE IMPOSSIBLE ACHE OF GRIEF AND LONELINESS EASE IN HIS HEART. IT IS NOT GONE--INDEED, HE KNOWS IT WILL NEVER COMPLETELY LEAVE HIM, THE LOSS IS TOO GREAT--BUT IT NO LONGER CONSUMES HIM. HE HAS BEGUN AGAIN.
THE DREAM IS STILL GOOD.
THE BEGINNING

THE NEW
MUTANTS
™

MINUTEMEN
Quick
STOP
RST